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INNOVATIVE POLICIES FOR ALPINE TOWNS
Alpine Space Small Local Urban Centres Innovative Pack





Programme Alpine Space - Project CAPACities (Competitiveness Actions and Policies for Alpine Cities)

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Contents

Executive summary	7
1 Project presentation	11
2 Methodological framework	15
2.1 Introduction	17
2.2 Attractiveness of towns in Alpine context	17
2.3 Competitiveness of towns in Alpine context	21
2.4 Small Local Urban Centres versus Mega Cities	22
2.5 Definition of the Alpine Space Small Local Urban Centre (AS-SLUC)	25
2.6 Basic features of AS-SLUCs according to our methodology	31
3 Representation of Alpine Space peculiarities	39
Preliminary remarks	41
3.2 CAPACities Alpine context	42
3.3 Demographic dynamics	47
3.4 Economic trends	52
3.5 AS-SLUCs peculiarities	56
3.6 Final remarks	57
4 Pilot actions	59
4.1 Introduction	61
4.2 Actions for competitiveness improvement	61
4.3 Pilot Projects description	63
4.4 Different territorial contexts	96
4.5 Challenges and topics	97
4.6 Implementation and innovative approach	99
4.7 A first evaluation of Pilot Projects	102
5 Thematic guidelines & tools	111
5.1 Small Alpine towns and territorial planning	113
5.2 Thematic guidelines - Introduction	116
5.3 Thematic guidelines	123
5.4 Tools - Introduction	144
5.5 Tools	153

Executive summary

According to CAPACities findings, the main strengths of the Alpine region are Human and Territorial Capital. Both are often hidden. The development of the Alpine region depends at a large extent on the strengthening of the relationship between these components.

The main aim of the project has been to develop the potential of Alpine Space Small Local Urban Centres (hereinafter also “AS-SLUCs”) through an integrated and trans-national approach, innovative urban policies, and creating alliances with the neighbouring METropolitan Growth Areas (MEGAs), both inside and outside the Alpine Space.

The project goal responds to a new approach to territorial governance which aims at integrating different issues – such as multifunctional urban uses, environment and culture, sustainable tourism, etc. – in spatial development strategies, through the design of tools able to promote innovative urban activities, pursuing the EU Lisbon Agenda applied at the local level.

These ambitious objectives have been reached through the development of innovative actions in town and country planning, as well as in social policies targeted to specific groups such as women, youth, aged people. Integrated strategic Local and Regional Actions and Plans to improve the quality of life and the competitiveness of Alpine centres – as well as Pilot Projects exploiting cultural, environmental, landscape, tourism, economic assets – are the main tangible results of CAPACities, often attained through participatory activities.

The AS-SLUCs Innovative Pack contains a selection of the best outcomes achieved, which include also the steps which in our experience need to be taken to carry out innovative projects enhancing the hidden territorial capital of small Alpine towns.

Such outcomes are here collected and discussed, making them available to those who might be interested in testing them in other territories.

Sharing a spatial framework: Alpine Space is not an homogeneous region

The first step of the project dealt with pointing out the specific features of small towns in mountain areas. This was a preliminary activity, needed to focus the object to be shared among the partnership.

This step put in evidence a first problem in analysing such a complex space: the difficulty to collect complete and homogeneous data for the whole Alpine region, at least at NUTS 3 statistical level.

A shared definition of “small urban centre” in the Alpine region was drawn using two basic indicators – the number of inhabitants and job density –, functional to express the degree of centrality of a given settlement. The thresholds of such indicators may vary according to a third datum: the elevation of the municipality.

The attractiveness of Alpine Space is unevenly distributed, and is certainly unique. But small and medium-sized Alpine towns are threatened on two fronts: the lack of economic opportunities due to declining economic factors (accessibility, small population and workforce size, etc.), and the “suburbanization” from larger peri-Alpine MEGAs, which can on one hand cancel the genuine inner-Alpine cultural and economic identity and on the other hand can offer opportunities to these centres.

As a result of this analysis, AS-SLUCs emerged as a new category of urban structures in the Alpine area, which is different from those in other contexts, starting from the “intuitive” evidence that mountain centres possess special features that constitute their potential; although these characteristics are poorly revealed by usual indicators. On the other hand, it must also be said that many local communities lack a full perception of the opportunities they have, or the know-how to exploit them.

A further result of this first analysis was the awareness of the need to improve criteria to adequately describe the main aspects of the Alpine Space. Qualitative criteria were therefore used to take into account some special features and functions of AS-SLUCs, such as activities attracting external users, landscape quality, transport and telecommunication infrastructures, etc.

Identity and differences: AS-SLUCs peculiarities

AS-SLUCs stand out from the great number of Alpine municipalities, because of a mix of spatial and statistical criteria, which are strongly interconnected. Therefore, the assessment of AS-SLUCs competitiveness and attractiveness took into account a number of indicators. The job centrality index and the out-commuting index were used to select municipalities according to their economic performances; while the population growth index and the elderly index to select municipalities according to their demographic performances, since these can describe their residential attractiveness. In other words, the identification of the AS-SLUCs is the result of the analysis of multi-dimensional criteria.

The geographic information database of trends characterizing CAPACities urban centres allows users to perform comparative analyses at the trans-national level. The investigation has shown that the Alpine area is highly fragmented in small and medium centres, which exercise the main planning and administrative functions. Around the 84% of municipalities belonging to CAPACities area have a population of less than 5,000 (this corresponds to the Alpine Space average). Data also demonstrate how regional administrative policies can have a strong influence on demographic and economic dynamics: some regions present completely different problems despite their common or similar morphology, landscape and culture.

There are elements to argue that local policies provided by Regions entirely located in the inner Alps are the most effective in keeping their territory attractive and competitive. Moreover, data show that a better accessibility to inner Alpine areas produces wide commuting districts, with a significant increase in attractiveness and competitiveness of the AS-SLUCs belonging to such parts of the Alps. The peculiarities of the different geo-political contexts, seem to demonstrate that coordinated local and regional policies are strategic in this large, special, and complex area. The good management of Alpine (environmental, cultural, social, economic, etc.) resources and the design of innovative strategies are crucial in order to keep the Alps attractive, primarily for those who choose to live and invest there. Our method has been tested only on regions involved in the project, due to difficulties in collecting comprehensive and detailed data on the whole Alpine Space. Despite this, the degree of representativeness of the results can be considered good, since large territories from the Eastern, Western, Northern, and Southern sides of the Alps were included in both

the analyses and the actions.

Pilot Projects: a concrete test

CAPACities Pilot Projects have allowed to test the integration of policies, and the enhancement of the diffuse, although hidden, territorial capital of AS-SLUC.

Five types of Pilot Projects have been performed by the partners:

- innovative actions and tools in urban or territorial plans to enhance local potential, and drive, at the local level, the transformations needed to take advantage of large-scale opportunities;
- target-group policies (women, youth, aged people);
- policies implying participation in territorial development processes;
- integrated strategic regional or local actions and plans to improve quality of life and competitiveness;
- sustainable exploitation of Alpine cultural, environmental, landscape, tourism and entrepreneurial resources.

The most common features of the Pilot Projects were the following:

- integrated approach to spatial and socioeconomic matters, even when dealing with specific issues;
- focus on economic development and a more efficient and sustainable exploitation of local resources;
- integration and amelioration of the effectiveness of the local policy framework. In this sense innovation can be intended as the capacity of improving the current regulative and policy tools, building a strategic vision shared by public and private stakeholders at different scales;
- promotion of a cooperative, project-oriented approach, particularly at the inter-municipal scale;
- reinforcement of interaction between local actors, and building consensus through the involvement of numerous and appropriate stakeholders;
- subsidiarity: carrying out the project together with local communities;
- being smart enough to attract external resources;
- voluntary (public/private, public/public) agreements and networks;
- orientation towards high performance levels, particularly as long as durability is concerned.

In connection with the Pilot Projects, CAPACities partners designed methodologies to deal with topics that are relevant over the Alps: sustainable development (Anton Melik Geographical Institute - AMGI); management of local planning processes (Regione Lombardia - RL); strategic planning (DI Herbert Liske - LI); economic valorisation of local resources (Adviser in Architecture, Urban Planning and Environment of Vaucluse - CAUE84); public participation and training (Institut d'Urbanisme de Grenoble - IUG; Regione Autonoma Valle d'Aosta - RAVDA; RL), energy and renewable resources (Regione Piemonte - RP), sustainable tourism (National Tourist Association - NTA), revitalisation of historic centres (Graubünden Canton - GR), gender policies (Società Consortile Langhe Monferrato Roero - LAMORO).

The methodologies belong to three main categories: those referred to plans and services that are specific to mountain areas; those oriented to manage the relationship between AS-SLUCs and highly urbanized regions; and those related to sectoral policies.

The experiences proposed by CAPACities project can support the attractiveness and competitiveness of whatever territorial entity in the whole Alpine Space, and particularly the local systems we defined as “AS-SLUCs”.

Sharing our experience

The section related to the tools specifies how public authorities and stakeholders in the Alpine Space can put into practice the above mentioned methodological results.

Three groups of tools can be recognised:

- analytical tools, for example sets of indicators that could be used to define the problem that a policy/programme/plan may face;
- policy tools, for example a specific kind of integrated plan;
- governance tools, *i.e.* instruments that deal with the management of policy processes and the interactions among stakeholders.

The majority of tools proposed by CAPACities partners are ‘multifunctional’ in the sense that they somewhat defied categorization, or at least did not fit into one single category. It is in the nature of projects promoting innovation, as CAPACities is, to allow or even call for procedures that are at the same time able to analyse and describe complex phenomena, and to introduce ways to deal practically with such complexity in development policies.

One of the emerging issues from these experiences is that of administrative and demographic size – a crucial theme in many mountain regions. Administrative bodies should cooperate, also on a voluntary basis, in order to build up local systems large enough to successfully face many challenges, including social inclusion.

The working out of such common territorial projects can be facilitated by effective participation.

Concluding, the AS-SLUCs Innovative Pack and, in general, the activities promoted by CAPACities project represent the effort made by the trans-national group to give an answer to the need for more competitiveness in the Alps. The key word is “cooperation”: through cooperation local communities can successfully face widespread problems and find appropriate solutions to them. Cooperation should be seen as a starting point for new projects and for a renewed Alpine identity, based on local resources and people, which are the primary, real assets to reinforce the competitiveness of Alpine towns.

1 project presentation

The project CAPACities, carried out under the European Union (EU) Transnational cooperation Alpine Space Programme 2007-2013, Priority I – “Competitiveness and Attractiveness”, aimed at promoting the potential of small Alpine towns through an integrated and transnational approach with innovative urban policies and actions, and creating alliances with the neighbouring alpine MEGAs and stronger metropolitan regions. The transnational coordination of the project was in charge to Regione Lombardia, General Directorate Sistemi Verdi e Paesaggio; the partnership was composed of ten partners from Public Administrations (Regional Authorities) with competence in town and country planning, a Scientific Research Centre devoted to geographical and territorial investigations, a Private Enterprise consultant for Urbanism and Regional Planning, a Local Development Agency representing seventy public and private bodies, focused on territorial human resources qualification, territorial animation, innovative development strategies enabling to overcome isolation, a National Tourist Association representing enterprises and organizations engaged in tourism, a University Institute for Spatial Planning, a provider of public services for Architecture, Spatial Plans and Environment.

The partnership fully represented public and private experts on urban and territorial planning and local development, connecting the local scale themes in a spatial perspective in accordance with the transnational approach needed to face the project issues.

It has been a good ensemble of diverse competences (administrative, scientific, and technical) that was needed to face the problem of small alpine centres in an effective way and with an integrated and transnational approach, especially with regard to sustainable spatial plans and operative policies addressed to integrate tourism, SMEs, labour market, environment, cultural and territorial identity in urban development.

The project goal responded to a new approach to territorial governance, able to integrate different issues - such as multifunctional urban uses, environment, culture, sustainable tourism - in spatial development strategies, through the design of operative tools promoting innovative urban activities, pursuing the Lisbon Agenda applied at local level.

To attain the above mentioned goals, great relevance within the project has been given to the testing of the tools and the thematic guidelines on Pilot Areas selected by partners, as well as to the final project results assessment and evaluation. These were reported and made available for policy-makers and stakeholders involved in the project.

In brief, the CAPACities project intended to:

- fit out Alpine Space Small Local Urban Centres (AS-SLUCs) to pursue the Lisbon strategy in a territorial perspective, and to promote innovative urban activities and functions;
- promote integrated spatial strategies for durable development and enhancement of small towns in a global context (by using tools and resources in an integrated and complementary way);
- strengthen relations amongst AS-SLUCs in order to improve attractiveness and competitiveness also in the light of improved relations with the metropolitan Alpine regions.

Author

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These ambitious objectives have been reached through:

- the development of innovative actions and tools in town and country planning, promoting the participation of women, youth, aged people to territorial development policies;
- the creation of integrated strategic Local and Regional Plans to improve the quality of life and the competitiveness of Alpine centres;
- Pilot Projects to exploit Alpine resources related to cultural, environmental, landscape tourism and local economy assets.

Shared operative strategies, integrated in territorial plans at different levels (regional and local), can help small communities to favour the permanence of population, promote opportunities for economic development, create adequate facilities and services for local community, increasing the number of potential users and creating alliances at the local level and with strong towns.

Activities in Pilot Areas were oriented to obtain concrete outputs by involving local communities and administrations.

An integrated methodological approach was adopted in order to promote dialogue between different disciplinary and scientific competences, needed to investigate and carry out new, appropriate tools to deal with the main project theme (integrated urban policies and actions).

Indeed, besides the Lead partner and Partners that were fully in charge competences in spatial planning and supporting local development, many other local authorities and entities have been involved in the implementation of operative tools.

One of the main outputs achieved by the project is the AS-SLUCs Innovative Pack, coordinated by the partner Regione Piemonte. The Innovative Pack (reported in chapter 5) synthesizes the most important outputs produced by CAPACities partners in the different project working packages. Especially through the pilot actions carried out at the local level with a fruitful dialogue with local decision makers and stakeholders.

Indeed, the AS-SLUCs Innovative Pack represents the best selection of results achieved during the project, constituting a comprehensive basis to carry out innovative projects enhancing the hidden territorial capital of little alpine towns and villages.

2 methodological framework

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Figures 1, 2 and 6 by David Bole

2.1 Introduction

Small towns play an important role in the Alps. Previous studies on the urbanization of the Alps have shown that urbanization processes in the Alps do not differ considerably from those in non-Alpine Europe. However, what raise concern are the data on employment in the growing economic sectors, which lag behind those in prealpine areas (Perlik, Messerli, Bätzing, 2001). The same authors establish that this calls for a policy of strengthening small and medium-sized Alpine towns, which may be the only ones capable of preserving the values, lifestyle, and management practices typical of the Alps. Failing this, there is a serious danger that true Alpine identity will be impoverished if prealpine agglomerations continue to spread deeper into Alpine space.

In line with this, this part of the booklet is intended to address key problem groups and to present basic methodological and theoretical points of departure. This chapter deals with the key issues of competitiveness and attractiveness, which are closely connected to the economic growth of a given region. We have therefore presented the key economic growth factors that must be taken into account in seeking possible development instruments. In doing so, we sought to highlight the special features that we can witness in small towns and in mountain areas.

Our definition of small Alpine urban centres relied on two basic criteria: the number of inhabitants, which defines a small local urban centre as opposed to a rural area or major urban centre (functional urban areas, or FUAs), and job density, which expresses the degree of centrality for a given area. We also took into account elevation because this is key to understanding the special features of the Alpine area. Based on this, we prepared the AS-SLUC map, which features all of the small Alpine centres within the Alpine Convention area. The only exception is Germany, for which we were unable to obtain job-density data. The concluding section of this chapter focuses on the problems that we became aware of while preparing it and which will have to be addressed in the future.

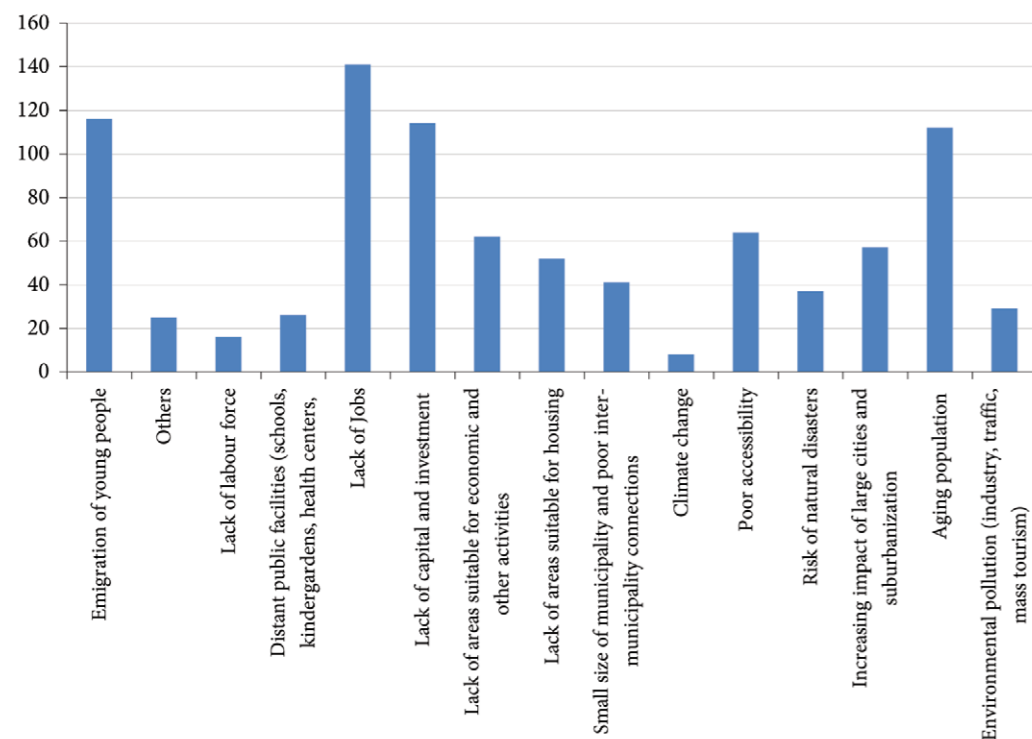
2.2 Attractiveness of towns in Alpine context

Due to their striking beauty, natural wealth and cultural heritage, and many opportunities for work and spending free time, the Alps are certainly one of the most attractive areas in Europe and in the world. Of course, the attractiveness of a given area can be understood in various ways: for living, for spending leisure time and recreation, and for the placement of economic activities and investments. The economic growth factors such as agglomeration, human, environmental, social capital, innovations also apply in a mountain context such as Alpine space. The attractiveness of Alpine space is often emphasized by its natural functions (such as biodiversity and water, energy, and biomass supply). Among social functions, its tourism and recreational function is most often highlighted (Nordergio, 2004), whereas other functions (e.g., economic, cultural, social, technological, etc.) are often overlooked and perceived as only concentrated in non-mountainous (flatland) areas. However, this point of view is misleading: the Alps are without doubt one of the most economically developed European regions, which is especially true for the central and western Alpine areas. However, the Alps reflect a certain degree of duality: on the one hand, some well-

connected valley regions are experiencing rapid development, which is often connected with the suburbanization of peri-Alpine metropolitan areas, on the other hand there are areas that are no longer attractive to people and capital, and are thus subject to depopulation (Bätzing, 2002).

The attractiveness of Alpine space is therefore unevenly distributed and is certainly unique. Like elsewhere in Europe, the urbanization of the Alps keeps changing, especially due to the impact of economic structural changes. Globalization and the shift to a flexible (post-Fordist) form of production are leading to a more pronounced internationalization of towns, including medium-size and small towns. In connection with the Alps, Perlik (2007) primarily mentions the growth and expansion of recreational functions from large towns towards the countryside, which is gradually acquiring urban functions and an increased urban image. On the other hand, older town centres with rich historical and cultural potential often stagnate if they are located outside the development circle that usually forms around major metropolitan areas.

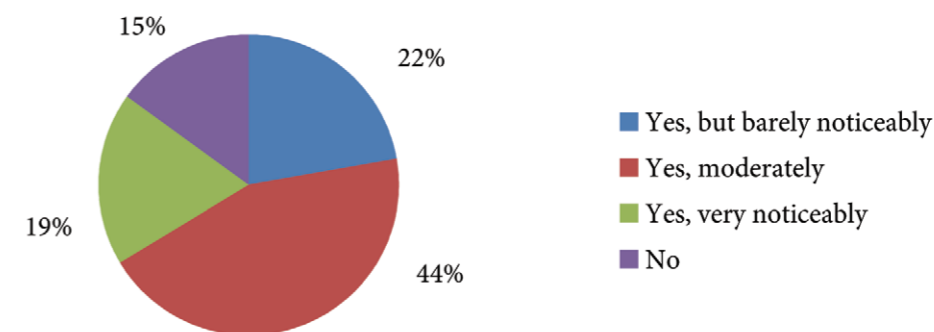
Small and medium-sized Alpine towns are therefore threatened on two fronts: the lack of economic opportunities due to declining economic factors (accessibility, small population and workforce size, etc.), and the “suburbanization” threat from larger peri-Alpine metropolitan growth areas (or MEGAs), which can destroy the real inner-Alpine cultural and economic identity. These threats were also identified in the survey carried out



[Fig. 1 - Greatest threats to future development in Alpine communities (survey questionnaire, carried out in March 2009 in 300 municipalities)]

in more than 300 Alpine communities: lack of jobs and investment on the one hand, and out-migration of young people and ageing of the population on the other, are the most serious problems of the Alpine municipalities (see figure 1). Suburbanization by large peri-Alpine MEGAs is perceived as a problem. This is a fact because nearly two thirds of the Alpine municipalities surveyed believe that the expansion of large towns in their vicinity represents a major or relatively large problem. Out-migration of young people towards MEGAs is consequently often perceived with diminishing innovative potential of smaller urban centres, which could result in the lack of labour force, lack of investments, and so on. However, some authors (Borsdorf, 2006) believe exactly the opposite, claiming that peri-urbanization tendencies in the Alps revive remote communities and bring new people and jobs. The aversion to greater influence of MEGAs should thus be understood as a concern for preserving control over one's own territory and not as resistance to the advantages provided by such influences. In some way, the ageing of the population and fear of the increasing impact of pre-Alpine MEGAs are somewhat paradoxical because all of the data (including those obtained from this survey) show that the Alps are still well-equipped with infrastructure. According to the survey, public infrastructure (i.e., schools, public administration, healthcare, etc.) are the least problematic factors, but they nonetheless cannot prevent the young labour force from relocating to larger MEGAs outside the Alps. This demographic “disease” probably also leads to the fear of lacking investment and capital, which could also result in a decreased number of jobs and economic stagnation.

The attractiveness for living is first of all a matter of decisions of individuals who select areas in line with their expectations, values, and opportunities. Seen in this light, the decisive factors must include the natural and cultural attractiveness of the area, job availability, land availability and its price, as well as social connections and relations. In connection with this, the notion of “amenities migration” has been developed when one speaks about places that are target areas for settlement exclusively because of the attractiveness of the place itself. A certain area can also be attractive for spending free time. Natural and cultural heritage also play a role here and, in the majority of cases, also appropriate infrastructure, hospitality, and an intact environment. Because areas for spending free time are only places of temporary



[Fig. 2: Perceived threat of nearby metropolitan areas (MEGAs) by Alpine communities]

residence (from the visitors' perspective), the number of jobs and the proximity of administrative institutions do not play a decisive role.

Exactly the opposite applies to the attractiveness for economic activities and investments. In this regard, these areas are uniform at a large degree but specific niches can be recognised according to special features. In this case, areas in the Alps are attractive if they are easily accessible, have a well organized infrastructure, and there is a qualified labour force available. Thus here as well the basic locational factors that are characteristic for locating activities play the decisive role.

Because mountain areas are underprivileged from the perspective of jobs, infrastructure, transport accessibility, and available services, they must be given new developmental impetus and a new developmental philosophy must be shaped for them that increases attractiveness for new settlement and for the revitalization of the existing settlement pattern. The main goals of spatial and development planning must be to improve the economic, social, and cultural position in the direction of improving the structure of available jobs and building infrastructure and educational facilities, thereby providing for the attractiveness of the countryside and mountain areas. This is especially important because tertiary and quaternary activities are being increasingly subordinated to the market. Insufficient and inappropriate infrastructure and services can limit economic growth in a number of ways:

- insufficient transport connections can increase the costs of goods and lengthen the time for supplying these to end users;
- insufficient education and insufficient care for people's health can affect the population's economic potential;
- ineffective public sector services can represent a great burden for the economic sector;
- the level of infrastructure can increase or limit the attractiveness of a region for foreign investment (Ilc Lavrič, 2004, p. 11).

As rural areas are especially exposed, at least urban areas must offer sufficient attractiveness, so that combined with sufficient infrastructure and a high level of innovation these can continue to attract a better-educated workforce, which is significant in terms of the input in new innovations. In doing so it is necessary to take into account the principles of sustainability because quickly developing centres can start to suffer due to overpopulation, pollution, and high property prices and wages. From the perspective of development, the Alps must bet on those centres that can offer sufficient agglomerative lines of force and that have sufficient attractiveness for new jobs and investments. Urban agglomerations will, it seems, also be more attractive for non-town dwellers because they offer more freedom and more opportunities for development.

With regard to which activities are insufficiently developed and could attract young people, new investments, and fresh capital, the respondents in our survey unanimously selected tourism. The fact is that the tourism function of the Alps is often emphasized and that, in the majority of regions affected by socioeconomic stagnation or decline, tourism appears to be an ideal secondary activity. Due to their central location and the vicinity of large European MEGAs and natural conditions, the Alps undoubtedly have a great tourism potential. However, the question is whether tourism can replace more than one third of all jobs in industry and agriculture, which are regarded as having no prospects. The number of those

that believe the future also lies in increasing organic farming is half the size of those that see the solution in tourism. The share of those that believe a better future lies in the development of high-tech innovative products is negligible. This may also be the result of the fact that, with regard to technologically intense activities, their "agglomeration" logic is emphasized; however, in theory this is more difficult to attain in the dispersed and less densely populated mountain areas than in the densely populated pre-Alpine urban agglomerations (MEGAs). Nonetheless, these smaller towns, which have not yet lost their true Alpine identity, carry great potential even at a global scale. They clearly see new opportunities especially in the development of recreational and tourism functions, which play an important role in a post-industrial society. Despite everything, we believe that small towns can successfully compete against larger flatland urban agglomerations. Here it is of key importance that they be connected, cooperate with each other, and try to make good use of their internal potential. The words written in some documents (ESDP, 1999) about polycentrism, forming urban partnerships, and networking should not remain merely words, but also become a topic of research as well as implementation by the responsible stakeholders.

2.3 Competitiveness of towns in the Alpine context

The economic growth factors are also important for towns competitiveness and attractiveness. Towns must especially strengthen those factors that raise their ability for the most effective access to local, regional, national, and international markets.

Towns' competitiveness relies on companies' capacity to effectively organize and use their resources, and on administration's capacity to improve the competitive position of the country, region, or town by improving macroeconomic policies, through market, transactions and by improving developmental factors at all spatial levels (Potočnik et al., 1995, p. 13). The competitiveness of a town is therefore not defined merely by its economic position and infrastructure, but much more by its production and regulation system, which is comprised of the quality of industrial production, financial and supply activities, and the symbiosis of institutional economic resources of the town or urban region in question (Ravbar, Plut, 1999, p. 101). The long-term economic dynamics also depend on the capacity of a region or town to develop or absorb new technologies, and in this regard the differing development of individual environments can also be understood as the result of different innovation and adaptation capacities. In this sense, it is necessary to ensure the capacity of a region to adapt and introduce innovations and, in the medium or long term, to alleviate regional problems and raise the competitiveness of the region and its companies (Gerhardtter, Gruber, 2001, p. 19). The processes described are being increasingly reflected in the structure of towns and their spatial development. In the Alpine space, these processes are reflected in urbanization, expansion of towns, changes in the built environment, and land use.

These small local urban centres play an important role in the Alps because previous research on urban phenomena shows that small towns and cities form the core of all social activities. A study of urbanization in Alpine Space has shown that urbanization processes in the Alps have caught up with those in non-Alpine Europe. A comparison of 1980 and 1990 employment data shows that growth sectors in the Alps lag behind those in peri-Alpine conurbations (Perlik, Messerli, Bätzing, 2001). The same authors conclude that a policy of

strengthening small and medium-sized towns in order to increase the value of lifestyles and economies in the Alps and to enhance town-country relations is preferable to the continued expansion of peri-Alpine agglomerations.

The approach by Perlik, Messerli, Bätzing was strictly functional because they took into account not only the towns, but also the surrounding municipalities with a close functional relationship. Urbanized zones were defined by demography, daily commuting, and economic structure. They formed functional urban areas (FUA) in the Alps, designating small and medium-sized towns as municipalities with at least 10,000 inhabitants and 5,000 jobs. Alpine FUAs were then classified into intra-Alpine and peri-Alpine categories. Examining the economic structure of Alpine FUAs, four basic specialized types were identified: commercial, industrial, tourist, and administrative. The authors identified 189 FUAs in the Alpine Space and discovered that small and medium-sized intra-Alpine FUAs are increasingly turning towards peri-Alpine conurbations (such as Milan, Zürich, Munich, Ljubljana, Geneva, and Nice).

Former core towns are losing their importance and centrality, and for many “post-suburban” dwellers the city centres are no longer important as sources for supply and entertainment.

2.4 Small Local Urban Centres versus Mega Cities

Urban and development studies provide many abstract theories that may be rather vague in some specific cases. This is also the case within Alpine Space with typical spatial features, settlement systems, and history. These theories have to be adapted to a real situation.

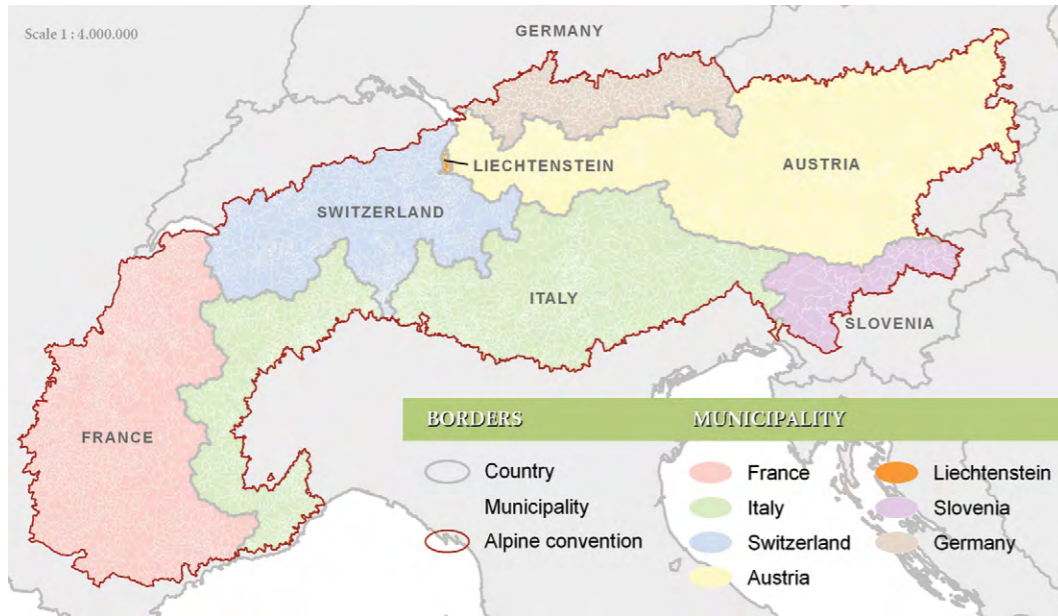
Alpine settlements span the complete range of the rural-urban continuum and thus differ one from another according to their structure and functions. Rural areas, which are sparsely populated and have mainly agricultural and ecological functions, are gradually followed by bigger settlements with a higher degree of centrality and economic functions. The opposite of rural areas are MEGAs, towns of global importance, playing the role of important production and service centres not only for their immediate surrounding countryside but also for broader areas. Centres in disfavored, marginalized, and sparsely populated areas normally suffer from being under-equipped with various services but could also have some functions that usually belong to bigger towns. This happens when some segments of the settlement structure are missing; more specifically, disadvantaged regions normally have smaller towns that might provide some functions characteristic of bigger towns. Many examples could be found in practice. In Slovenia, some border municipalities were able to be established even though they did not have the number of inhabitants necessary for the creation of a municipality. The main reason was their uniqueness and tradition, and also a different situation within the territorial structure. With such status, these municipalities/areas have gained in importance, which on the one hand is not typical for such areas, but on the other hand is necessary for the development and for the long-term existence/preservation of a cultural landscape and colonization. Such exceptions could lead in two directions. For some areas, the burden of extra functions is too heavy and consequently the opportunities are not used to the best possible extent. This happens frequently in areas with inadequate (human) potential, where the society does not need such functions or where the resources do not match the basic expectations for the use of the functions. Such areas

are often in economic decline, exposed to social erosion, and are consequently undergoing reforestation. Just the opposite situation can be found in vivid centres with rich potential, taking the benefits of the superstructure and thus raising their importance in the entire settlement system. Such centres draw their strength from their identity, natural and cultural heritage, and, most frequently, from their manifold development potential, all of which are woven into a winning development combination. In the case of the Alps, this situation can be additionally strengthened by tourism superstructure, in which services exceed the needs of the local population, and tourists increase consumption. From the development perspective, such centres should serve as a basis for future deliberations and thus be utilized as the backbone of future development. They are important service centres for their surrounding countryside, but also adequate partners for larger centres and for national or regional governments when fulfilling basic development functions. Such centres thus have a key position in relation to their surrounding countryside and also in relation to MEGAs, providing an intermediary function between growth poles and their most distant users. Although such local centres cannot keep pace with MEGAs, they play an important role for them and, consequently, the relation between them could be more often described as partnership than dependency.

Polycentrism is both an analytical concept and a policy option. Both the ESDP and ESPON have set a widely accepted political objective: to counterbalance the over-developed MEGAs at all territorial levels of EU space. Polycentricity is opposed to monocentricity, in which service provision and territorial management competence is increasingly concentrated in a single centre. Polycentricity is also opposed to urban sprawl, in which the structure of secondary centres is diluted in a spatially unstructured continuum. Rather, polycentricity is about promoting balanced and multiscale types of urban networks that are most beneficial from a social and economic point of view, for the core areas and the peripheries alike (ESPON 1.1.1, 2004). It is assumed that a polycentric urban system is more efficient, more sustainable, and more equitable than both monocentric and dispersed small settlements.

Polycentricity is a theoretical concept that could be implemented in specific mountain regions such as the Alps. Sufficient agglomeration densities (human and social capital, and innovative potential) could be achieved through complementarities, solidarity, and sharing of functions throughout the Alpine urban system, which is primarily made up of small and medium-sized towns. The networking and concentration of such small urban entities could prove to be a counterweight to larger pre-Alpine agglomerations. Aspirations towards a more balanced, polycentric urban system are written in basic European documents, such as the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP). Our higher-ranking objective is thus to improve and strengthen small local urban centres as motors of territorial development in Alpine space with special regard to endogenous territorial capital, urban/rural linkages, small/mega urban linkages, and so on.

The polycentricity index measured by ESPON 1.1.1 showed that the Alps have a very diverse urban structure: Slovenia and Germany have an above-average polycentricity index due to their spatial policies in the past 50 years. Austria and France have a very low degree of polycentricity, and Switzerland and Italy have an average polycentricity index. However, the best precondition for achieving a real polycentric structure is where the distance between



[Fig. 3: Limits of the Alpine Convention]

urban centres is small. Morphological proximity is of course no guarantee of cooperation, but proximity does nevertheless provide towns with a better opportunity for functional integration. In the ESPON 1.1.1 project, the morphological distance was calculated between FUAs and municipalities, and the areas within the 45-minute isochrones were labeled as PUSH areas (potential urban strategic horizons). Alpine space is surprisingly well covered by these PUSH areas, much better than other mountain areas in Europe (e.g., Scandinavia, the Pyrenees, etc.). This can be regarded as a positive precondition for establishing a polycentric urban system in the Alps, as a counterweight to nearby MEGAs.

There are several recommendations particularly targeted at national policymakers in order to achieve a more balanced polycentric urban system. They vary from strategic to spatial and non-spatial planning instruments. From the Alpine perspective, balanced competitiveness among small towns seems the most important action. An example of cooperation at a micro-scale between AS-SLUCs is when a certain small local urban centre can offer something that is lacking in a neighbouring urban centre and vice-versa. Creating such “small scale” alliances and linkages between AS-SLUCs can make them stronger as a whole, while at the same time preserving their genuine inner-Alpine identity. However, not only alliances at a micro scale are important: alliances among FUAs and MEGAs and surrounding small local urban centres are also important. It is also vital for decision-makers in larger MEGA agglomerations to realize that an economically stable and culturally vibrant urban and surrounding countryside is in their interest as well.

2.5 Definition of the Alpine Space Small Local Urban Centre (AS-SLUC)

The term “small Alpine town” itself contains three categories that are far from easy to define. None of these categories (i.e., “small town,” “Alpine town,” and “town”) has clearly defined

boundaries; however, these are vital in research. This section therefore provides certain criteria that can be used to quantify the concept of “small Alpine town,” although at the same time we agree that this is an unrealistic division; however, it is vital for obtaining and comparing data. The definition of a small Alpine town is basically a big compromise between the wishes of researcher on the one hand, and the reality of obtaining data and their availability on the other.

The Alps

At first glance, the Alps seem most easily defined. The Alps are distinguished from other European mountain ranges by being young and extremely diverse in terms of their relief and geological structure, which is also reflected in the fact they are more difficult to traverse and access than certain other mountain ranges. However, the Alps are not only a geographical category, but also a legal one because individual Alpine states and regions use different criteria for defining the boundaries of Alpine space. In some cases, Alpine zones are delineated by elevation and surface inclination (Slovenia), whereas in others (Lombardia) by absolute and relative elevation or socioeconomic indicators (employment sector, age structure, etc.).

These indicators partly coincide with the limits set by the Alpine Convention. This is an international convention on the protection of natural heritage and promotion of sustainable development in the Alps, which was signed by eight Alpine countries. The statute of the Alpine Convention also delineates Alpine space: the convention covers the territory of almost 6,000 municipalities in eight countries, and a total population of nearly 13 million. It excludes all major prealpine agglomerations and in some countries it is even officially used to define the boundaries of alpine zones. In this paper, Alpine Space is thus limited to the area defined in the Alpine Convention, which means it covers approximately 191,000 km².

Small town/urban centre

The academic definitions of urban and central are clearly too theoretical and considerably deficient for research purposes. This is why definitions of small towns were also sought in other comparable studies. It turned out that the concept of a “small town” is very flexible and depends on the purpose of a given study. The scholarly project The Role of Small and Medium-Sized Towns (SMESTO) was part of the ESPON program at the European level. This project reviewed three statistical approaches to defining SMESTOs in Europe: the morphological approach, functional approach, and administrative approach. It also described specific methodological approaches to defining small and medium-size towns, but it seems to generate more new questions than methodological solutions.

In other studies, the most frequently used criteria for defining small towns primarily include combinations of functional and formal criteria. This means that a small town must meet the criteria on population size (a formal criterion) and centrality (a functional criterion). The latter is the most difficult to define. In practice, the number or density of jobs was often used as a criterion (Perlik, Messerli, Bätzing, 2001), or the influential countryside was defined by studying daily commuting (Benini, 2007) or the degree of available central functions.

In general, European applied studies most often use “softer” definitions of small towns, in which subjective criteria predominate over analytical quantitative criteria. Some studies

(Alpcity) understand small towns from a problem-related perspective: a small town is thus any central settlement of a lower rank that performs certain central functions for the surrounding rural countryside and is affected by common problems (e.g., ageing of the population, out-migration, lack of labour force, etc.).

The theory of urban centres derives historically from Walter Christaller's Central Place Theory. According to this theory, the centre is defined as a settlement or nodal point that, by its functions, serves an area around it for goods and administrative functions for the consuming population in its surrounding area (Elsevier Dictionary of Geography, 2007).

It can be concluded that urban centres are settlements that offer employment in industrial and/or service activities to the surrounding rural and suburban area. Because of this they have a central position in a given populated area.

In contrast to urban settlements, rural settlements usually have no central functions and no employment besides agriculture. Suburban settlements also have few or no other functions besides living because the majority of the population commutes daily to the nearby urban centre. This conclusion about urban centres and about strengthening small towns in the Alpine Space fits in well with our main goal regarding the promotion of economic and social potential of AS-SLUCs through innovative urban policies and actions. Nonetheless, we need to make a clear distinction between urban settlements that are inside larger urban agglomerations and urban settlements that represent the "territorial" capital of Alpine culture, society, and the economy. Such urban settlements are an object of investigation and need to be further defined in their territorial and administrative dimension.

Despite different criteria, all of the studies share the same important finding that a small town is a town of the lowest "rank," which nonetheless maintains certain functions that are also intended for its rural surroundings.

Defining a small Alpine town

For the purposes of this study, "strict" classification criteria are necessary. The desiderata in defining small Alpine towns were the following:

- to select towns that have a certain degree of centrality, even though the lowest possible (e.g., primary school, specialized shops, etc.), for the surrounding settlements;
- to take into account the properties of mountain areas, which due to large distances and harsher settlement conditions can also contain smaller settlements than the flatlands, but nonetheless with a pronounced central function.

Small towns should therefore have some degree of centrality, even though only basic functions such as schools, specialized shops, police, and so on. Another interesting contribution from a demographic point of view is Bätzing, Perlik, and Dekleva's (1996), who categorized communities into several types. From the "small town" point of view, the most important is probably the "local centre" type. This includes all communities with lower administrative functions and at least 2,000 inhabitants, or 5,000 if they do not have political and administrative functions.

In French literature, the population thresholds are significantly lower, probably due to more fragmented territorial structure. Guillaume (2006) characterizes French small towns as mountain municipalities with less than 5,000 inhabitants and independent from larger

urban units. However, more importantly, in her opinion, small alpine towns should have a degree of centrality, especially for the surrounding countryside.

From these studies of small cities and central towns, it can be concluded that a "typical" small urban centre is usually defined by the number of inhabitants – for instance, in Slovenia a minimum number of inhabitants in a town is around 1,500 and at least 5,000 in a municipality (or several municipalities, if they belong to an urban area). Other Alpine regions have different population rules – from a maximum of 5,000 (Piedmont, Rhône-Alpes) to 2,500 (Lombardia). The centrality of the town is measured by basic functions (administrative centre, and basic educational, healthcare, public, and shopping facilities) or by the number and structure of jobs (1,000 jobs or more, most of them in industry or services) or by the "location divergence ratio" (jobs ÷ working population).

Problems connected with defining small towns

However, all of these definitions are abstract and, when collecting data on the entire Alps, one encounters many problems. The first problem is connected with the unit of space. A central settlement or town is a spatial unit of a lower rank, for which practically no data can be obtained. Seeking data is thus problematic at the very beginning because data can only be collected in municipalities, which generally represent larger spatial units and include several settlements or even small towns. Researchers seem to have reconciled themselves to this fact because all of the available studies on large/small/medium-sized towns use the municipality as the basic research unit (the NUTS 5 level). At the same time, other problems occur in connection with the spatial unit: in the Alps, municipalities are spatially extremely heterogeneous units, dependent on the historical and administrative development of individual countries. The average population in an alpine municipality numbers about 2,500, but with major differences: the average French Alpine municipality has 1,370 inhabitants, but the average Slovenian municipality has almost 10,000 inhabitants. German, Swiss, and Austrian municipalities are also larger than average. This heterogeneous spatial structure thus makes it difficult to compare and analyze municipalities within the Alps.

Another major problem is the availability and comparability of data. Every Alpine country uses its own method of collecting data, which is often not comparable to the methods used by other countries. The same type of information is often collected, but the method of collecting it is different, which is why the results are also often not harmonized. In addition, there are problems connected with data obtained by statistical offices in individual countries. In our analysis, data are missing for the German Alpine municipalities, whose data are practically incomparable with other municipalities; this is why we had no other choice than to exclude them from the analysis. The findings thus refer to the major part of the Alps, or 90% of the total Alpine population and 95% of Alpine territory.

Our definition of small Alpine towns

For the purpose of this study, municipalities that meet the centrality criteria must be extracted. At the same time, the specific features of mountain regions must be taken into account, in which function is much more important than size. In addition, all of the limitations connected with obtaining and harmonizing data must be taken into account.

These three basic factors can serve to define small Alpine centres. To sum up:

- small alpine towns are hierarchically low central urban settlements in the Alpine area;
- they offer basic functions and employment for the surrounding rural area;
- they do not belong to any large functional urban area in prealpine space and have a smaller number of inhabitants.

Centrality is probably the most difficult criterion to determine. Due to the availability of data, we propose that centrality be determined by the ratio between jobs and working population. A high density of jobs is certainly a characteristic of central towns because central functions are usually expressed with a higher number of jobs available.

The ratio between the total number of jobs and residents 15 to 64 years old could prove a good criterion for determining centrality:

$$\text{Job density} = (\text{total number of jobs} \div \text{residents of working age}) \times 100$$

If job density exceeds 50, we can conclude that the settlement has certain central functions and is attracting employees from the surrounding countryside. High job density can also imply high diversification and could mean that the municipality is an employment hub in its region. Suburban municipalities, which offer only limited employment and a high working-age population, would have lower job densities (Tappeiner, Borsdorf, and Tasser, 2008, p. 153). Rural municipalities, which offer greater amounts of agricultural employments, would in theory also have lower job densities.

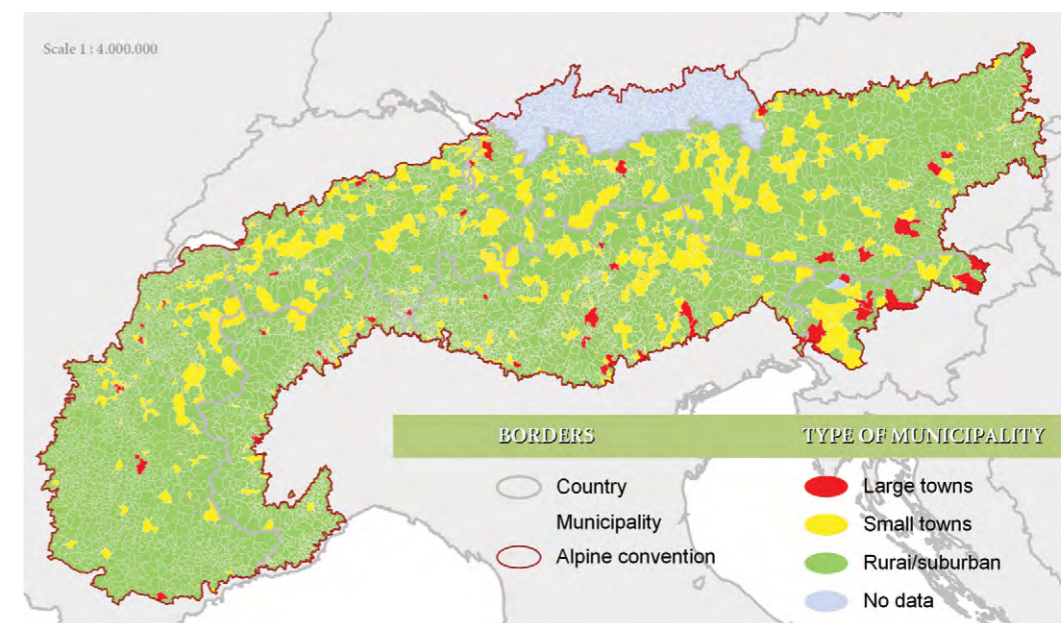
Centrality is the most important criterion for determining the urban character of settlements, but we have to define exactly what “small” urban centres are. The number of inhabitants in the municipality is the most straightforward criterion, yet the most difficult one. Not only the minimum, but the maximum number of inhabitants should also be set. A criterion of 20,000 inhabitants is reasonably acceptable because it is also the minimum limit for functional urban areas, which are by definition towns of national and transnational importance.

The proposal is that small urban centres be represented by those central municipalities (job density over 50) that have at most 20,000 and at least 5,000 inhabitants. The minimum population threshold could be lowered if the municipality lies at a higher elevation. The following elevations and minimum thresholds that a municipality must meet in order to comply with our definition of a small town were established. Because of the specific mountain settlement, even towns with a smaller population can be important centres for the extensive rural countryside:

- a minimum of 2,500 inhabitants if the municipal central town lies above 600 m, and
- a minimum of 1,000 inhabitants if the central town lies above 1,000 m.

To summarize, the criteria for determining small alpine towns in our study are:

	Centrality	Elevation	Minimum population	Maximum population
	50 jobs/100 working pop.	up to 600 m	5,000	20,000
or	50 jobs/100 working pop.	600–1000 m	2,500	20,000
or	50 jobs/100 working pop.	above 1000 m	1,000	20,000



[Fig. 4: AS-SLUCs (yellow colour) according to the methodology mentioned above]

We are aware that the criteria described above cannot be accurate enough to define a small Alpine town. However, we hope that they come fairly close to this definition and contain a suitably large sample of true small Alpine towns to meet the conditions of statistical confidentiality.

Additional criteria for the definition of AS-SLUCs

Alpine Space Small Local Urban Centres (AS-SLUCs) is a new category invented to represent and describe urban structures in the Alpine area and to differentiate them from those in other territorial contexts, starting from the “intuitive” evidence that mountain centres possess special features that constitute their potential; these characteristics are often not revealed by common indicators. On the other hand, many local communities themselves lack a complete perception of the opportunities they have or the know-how needed to exploit them.

For this reason, the previously used criteria are insufficient to cover all the aspects of Alpine space, mainly because of the limited number of existing quantitative criteria. Some qualitative criteria must be used to take into account the special features and central functions of individual AS-SLUCs.

The most striking among the criteria mentioned above is centrality: we cannot discuss centres if they have no central functions, but how does one define central functions? Of course, job density could be understood only as an approximation. To solve the question of centrality, we rely on Christaller’s central places theory, which defines the polycentric structure of settlements by the most regularly used. Its main focus is on the hierarchy of settlements, defined by central functions that a single settlement has for the neighbouring settlements. Accordingly, a multilevel system of settlements could be defined, representing

the functional interlinkages that constitute spatial structure. Following this theory, at least four additional criteria for defining centrality can be proposed.

I) Presence of activities that are also used by the population in the surrounding countryside

- Public activities:
 - Administration (head of municipality)
 - Judicature (municipal court)
 - Education (primary/secondary school and preschool)
 - Health (health centre/clinic, pharmacy)
 - Post office
 - Culture/sports (culture hall, theatre and/or sports hall)
- Market activities:
 - In addition to several small retail stores, at least one specialized retail store (appliances, furniture, etc.)
 - Bank/insurance office

II) Functional criteria

- Commuting to the centre from the surrounding countryside (at least 25% of the total urban jobs are held by workers living outside the urban settlement).
- A special category of AS-SLUCs could also be defined according to their extra role in the spatial structure. These towns may not have a complete set of central functions, but play an “extraordinary” role in the Alpine urban system. A detailed systematization could thus be made in order to strengthen the understanding of the role that AS-SLUCs have in the spatial structure.
- The hybrid character of urban municipalities according both to demographic and centrality criteria needs to be highlighted. This could help to distinguish among urban-industrial centres, urban-agricultural centres, urban-touristic centres, mono-functional and multi-functional urban centres.

Take into considerations the particular characteristics of the Alpine space, additional elements could also be considered:

III) Morphologic and landscape characters

Considering morphologic and landscape characters there are three different dimensions that could be considered:

- urban shape types - isolated municipalities, valley bottom, linear municipalities, conurbations around a main centre (inside or outside the alpine region), etc.;
- municipalities characterised by high or low density of built up areas;
- orography and its limitations to urban growth; municipalities and their local provision of open spaces (grassland, tended fields).

IV) Accessibility levels

The relation between roads and public transport infrastructure plays a key role in determining the type, intensity and stability of interactions among different Alpine sub-regions areas. Assuming a broader viewpoint, they also work as a descriptor of the links between the Alpine spaces and spaces outside the Alps.

2.6 Basic features of AS-SLUCs according to our methodology

Our division of Alpine space yields the following three basic categories:

- small-town municipalities or AS-SLUCs (those meeting the criteria of centrality and population size);
- rural or suburban municipalities (those not meeting the centrality criteria);
- medium-sized and large towns (those exceeding our criteria, having a population of more than 20,000).

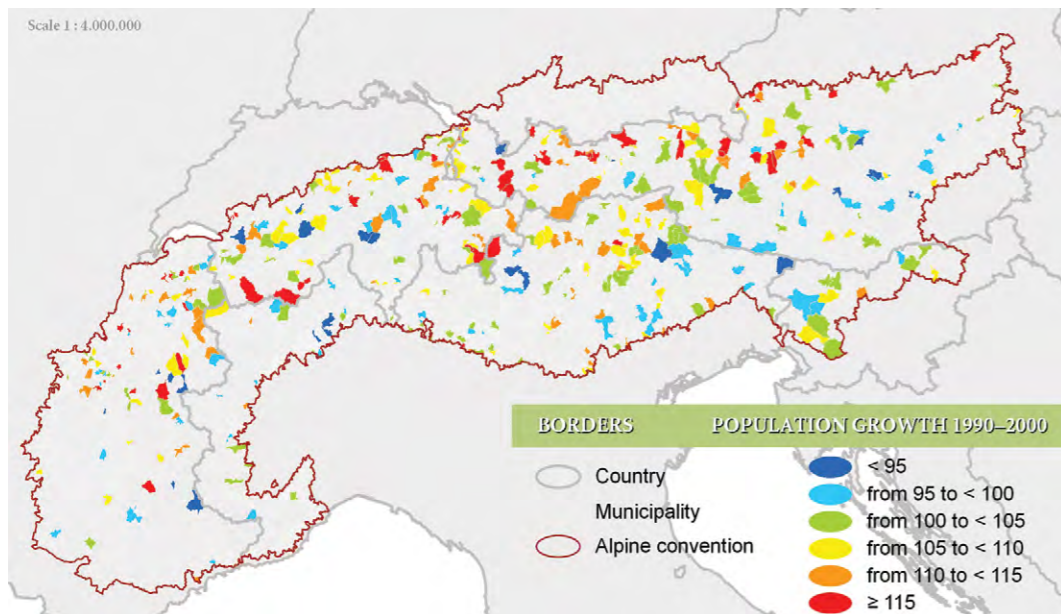
The implementation of the definition of small towns demonstrates that 440 small Alpine towns or municipalities can be recognised. They only account for 8% of all municipalities, but have almost 20% of all the population and cover 15% of the total territory. The majority of small towns can be found in Austria (130), followed by Italy (110), Switzerland (102), France (83), Slovenia (13), and Liechtenstein (2).

Table 1 - Basic settlement features in the Alps						
Type of municipality	Number and percentage (%) of municipalities	Population and percentage (%)	Area in km ²	Density of settlement	Area suitable for settlement in km ²	Density of settlement in areas suitable for settlement
Large towns	54 (1%)	2,363,822 (19%)	3,976	595	1,49	1,586
Small towns (AS-SLUCs)	440 (8%)	2,904,667 (24%)	27,385	106	4,85	599
Rural, suburban	5,108 (91%)	6,945,890 (57%)	148,536	47	21,897	317
Total	5,602	12,214,379	179,897	88	28,237	433

The description of the basic features of small Alpine towns was based on an available and extensive database with 81 statistical variables. The basic features calculated from reliable harmonized data include the ones that will be presented in the next paragraphs.

Population growth

Small Alpine towns (AS-SLUCs) had a positive growth index from 1990 to 2000, but lower than the rural/suburban municipalities. This is also connected with the growth of prealpine metropolitan agglomerations and the peri-urbanization of Alpine Space. The highest growth is typical of AS-SLUCs in Switzerland (+7%), and the lowest of those in Slovenia (+2.4%), which is probably connected with the specific demographic tendencies of individual Alpine countries. In general, the Alps are characterized by above-average population growth when compared to other EU members (Heinrich, 2008), but also by more pronounced regional differences due to abandonment of peripheral areas and the growth of prealpine and Alpine urban agglomerations (Batzing, 2002).



[Fig. 5: Population growth index in small Alpine towns between 1990 and 2000]

Ageing of the population

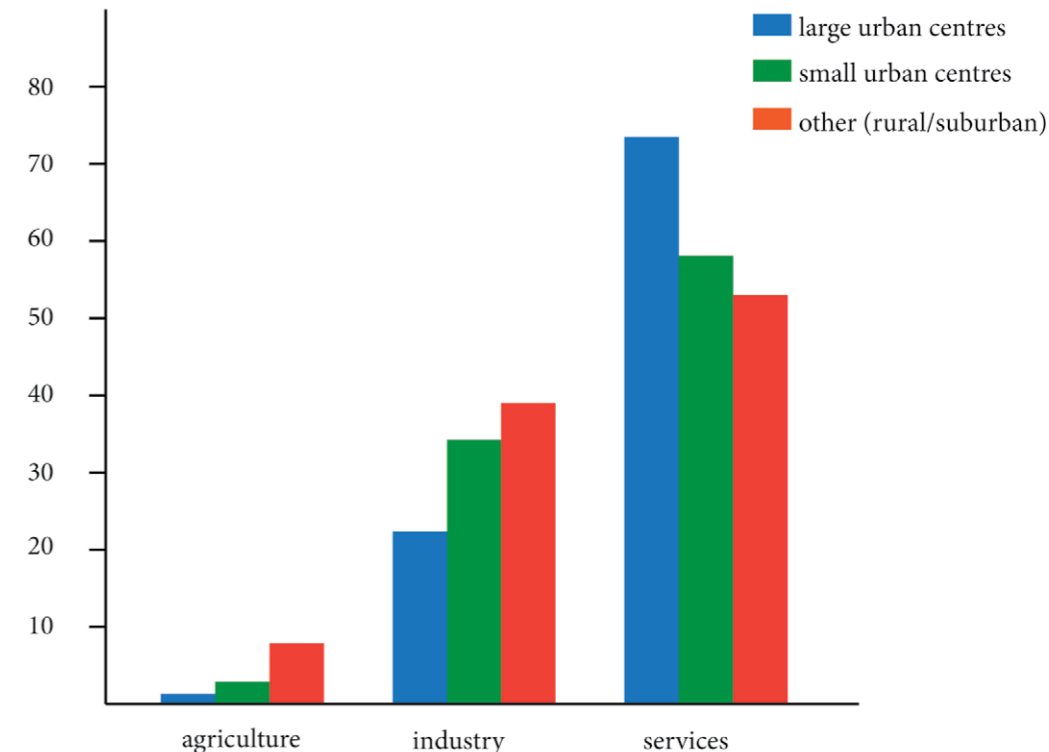
The age index, which shows the ratio between the older (over 64) and younger (under 14) population, reveals a fairly negative situation in AS-SLUCs. The index value is 92, which means that the older population predominates over the younger, whereas the index in large towns is 123, and in other municipalities also above 100. The age index raises special concern in French small towns (77), whereas it is the most favorable in Italian small towns. This shows a quite dramatic image of this problem in the Alps, which is primarily the result of young people moving away and starting families in the nearby Alpine agglomerations, which provide better employment opportunities (Bender, 2008).

Working population

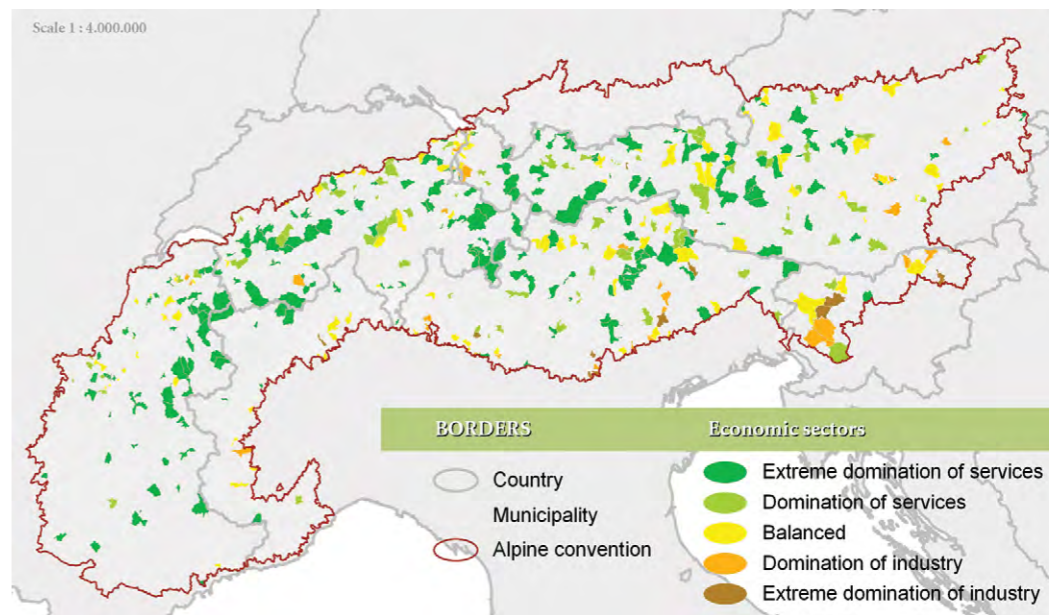
Despite the fact that AS-SLUCs have the oldest population, information on the level of work activity shows exactly the opposite. The total share of working population is 67.9%, which is considerably more than in large towns and rural/suburban municipalities. The level of work activity is also a good indicator of the fact that in small Alpine towns various important economic activities take place, which provide for above-average employment of the local population. Differences in the work activity of women are also evident: it is the greatest in Switzerland and Liechtenstein, and the lowest in Italy, where only 56% of women 15 to 64 years old work.

Jobs

The sector structure of jobs is as expected: services strongly predominate in large towns, which is the result of a higher level of centrality and greater diversity of services provided to the nearby population. In small Alpine towns, the share of services is significantly smaller



[Fig. 6: Sector structure of jobs in the Alps]



[Fig. 7: Predominating sector structure of small Alpine towns]

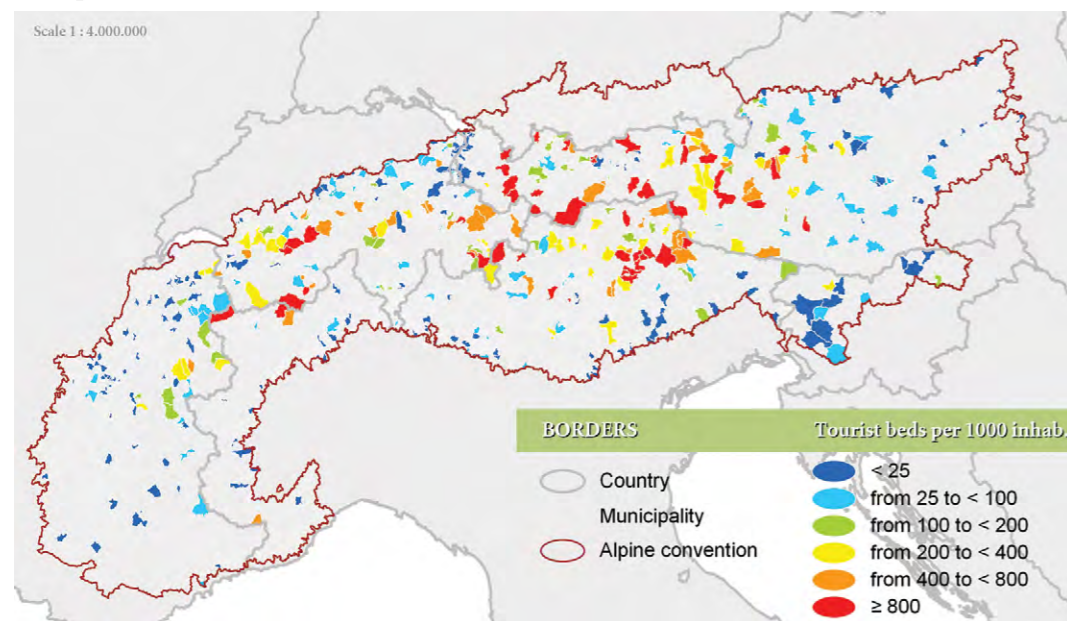
(i.e., slightly above 60%), whereas the share of industry is less than 40%, and the share of agriculture is merely 2%. This partially contradicts the predominating concepts of the Alps as an area exclusively oriented towards tourism and services.

Great differences also occur between individual regions. In Slovenia, small towns are characterized by above-average industrialization, but significantly poorer availability of services, which is the result of intense industrialization in the socialist era. On the other hand, Swiss small towns are markedly service-oriented because the share of services exceeds 67%. This is partly the result of the pronounced tourism orientation of certain small towns at higher elevations (e.g., Davos, St. Moritz, Chamonix, and Albertville), which are also important because of their service function because they serve as a supply centre for extensive and poorly settled areas.

Data on job density are also interesting because it turns out that, despite their size, small towns are very important in terms of employment. In small towns, job density equals 74 per 100 working population and is only slightly lower than in larger towns (78 jobs per 100 working population). In France, the job density in small towns is even significantly higher than in large towns. This only confirms the assumptions that in the Alpine area small towns perform an important function because they serve as employment centres, which is a precondition for the development of other functions (e.g., cultural and social) and for keeping their role in embodying regional identity.

Tourism

The tourism function is frequently mentioned in connection with the development of the Alps (both their rural and urban parts). A comparison of the data on the number of tourist beds per 1,000 inhabitants shows that AS-SLUCs are at the centre of the tourism function



[Fig. 8: Density of tourist beds per 1,000 inhabitants in small Alpine towns]

in the Alps. Small Alpine towns have an average of 141 beds per 1,000 inhabitants, whereas larger towns only have 30, and the remaining municipalities (i.e., rural/suburban) have 90. The differences are so obvious that it can be claimed with great certainty that small towns are also centres of tourism activities in the Alps. Many well-known winter and year-round resorts fall within our definition of a AS-SLUC (e.g., Bormio, Chamonix, Bled, St. Moritz, Predazzo, Davos, etc.). By far the most tourist beds can be found in Austria, Italy, and Switzerland, whereas tourism appears to be less developed in France and Slovenia.

Transport accessibility and mobility

The Alps are regarded as difficult to access, especially because of their great differences in relief. Transport accessibility can also be defined as the road distance to the nearest regional centre. The table below shows that the inhabitants of small Alpine towns have slightly poorer access to the nearby regional centres than larger towns, which is completely understandable. However, there are great differences between individual countries because, for example, road accessibility in Italy is considerably poorer than in Switzerland. This is partly the result of the methodology used for defining regional centres, and partly the result of the condition of road and settlement infrastructure.

Table 2 - Road distance (in km) to the nearest regional centre with the percentage of towns in each group						
		0–24 km	25–49 km	50–74 km	75–99 km	100 km and more
Austria	AS-SLUCs	28.2	15.4	26.9	18.9	10.6
Switzerland	AS-SLUCs	46.4	30.5	17.9	4.6	0.6
France	AS-SLUCs	46.5	23.5	17.6	10.6	1.7
Italy	AS-SLUCs	6.6	17.8	27.8	26.5	21.3
Liechtenstein	AS-SLUCs	100,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
Slovenia	AS-SLUCs	4.4	34.7	24.1	32.6	4.2
the Alps	larger towns	56.8	13.9	13.1	8.1	8.1
the Alps	AS-SLUCs	28.7	21.5	23.3	17.1	9.4

Employee mobility is also as expected. Small towns serve as obvious employment centres because the daily commuter balance shows that the number of incoming commuters exceeds the number of outgoing commuters by 234,000. This confirms the thesis that small towns are important employment centres in the Alps; moreover, the data show that the total number of those commuting to small Alpine towns is higher than the number of those commuting to large towns (i.e., 830,000 to small towns and 629,000 to large towns). However, regional differences occur here as well: French small towns are especially attractive to daily commuters, whereas Slovenian small towns attract them the least.

Certain other features of small towns can also be extracted from the harmonized data, although the most important ones have already been described. The quantitative analysis of

the selected sample of small towns reveals that the main problem is the ageing of population and especially the lack of young families. Another feature is the important employment function reflected in both job density and the level of attraction to commuters from the surrounding areas. Due to their specific natural and settlement conditions, small Alpine towns (AS-SLUCs) serve as the most important employment centres in the Alps, and thus bear other social and cultural functions. The tourism function remains highly important for small towns, especially because they also represent the centres of the tourist activities in the Alps. However, nearly 40% of all the employees work in industry, which shatters the stereotypical notions of small Alpine towns being exclusively centres of tourism, administration, and other services.

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**3 representation of
Alpine Space peculiarities**

3.1 Preliminary remarks

The definition of Alpine Space Small Local Urban Centre (AS-SLUC) is far from easy, as described in the previous chapter.

The Alpine geo-political context is very heterogeneous in terms of number and, as a consequence, demographic size of municipalities. Moreover, municipalities' demographic size can't represent many AS-SLUCs peculiarities by its own: alpine urban centres can play a different role in the inner Alpine system and also considering the extra-Alpine system. For example small urban centres can be attractive and competitive from an economic point of view, but also in reference to the provision of urban facilities, or from a residential point of view. The list could be longer, however a common definition of AS-SLUCs requires to identify measurable indicators and to fix quantitative criteria to operate a selection among the great number of Alpine municipalities.

The analysis of competitiveness and attractiveness of AS-SLUCs could take into account:

- the job centrality index and the out commuting index to select municipalities according to economic performances,
- the population growth index and the elderly index to select municipalities according to demographic performances, which could be indicative of a residential attractiveness.

The urban centres competitiveness and attractiveness from a functional point of view (related to the urban facilities provided) are much more difficult to analyse in terms of number and kind of facilities and respective catchment areas, because of data availability problems. For this reason it is possible to suppose that municipalities playing a key role in terms of functional provision have, as consequence, higher amount of jobs.

The GIS database for transnational comparison of trends and dynamics characterizing CAPACities urban centres allows these and other comparative analysis: the context analyses of these main indicators suggests to set up multi-dimensional quantitative criteria for identifying AS-SLUCs.

Table 1 - Municipalities by demographic size		
Demographic size	=	Class attribute
Pop. less than (<) 1,000	=	Small alpine centres (Small_ac)
Pop. between (≥) 1,000 and 5,000 (<)	=	Medium alpine centres (Medium_ac)
Pop. between (≥) 5,000 and 20,000 (<)	=	Large alpine centres (Large_ac)
Pop. more than (≥) 20,000	=	Extra Large alpine centres (ExtraLarge_ac)

The demographic size of municipalities, despite of the different geo-political contexts, is a key element directing the interpretative analysis of data.

For this reason, Alpine municipalities have been grouped in four classes according to their demographic size¹. Of course, it's important to take into account that in all geo-political contexts the demographic size of municipalities tends to decrease as altitude increases.

¹ Data reported the document in relation to small, medium, large and extra-large alpine centres are calculated as average values among municipalities' data according to specific selections (municipalities' demographic sizes and/or administrative belonging).

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Figures by Diana Giudici and Luca Tomasini (Politecnico di Milano - DIAP - Department of Planning and Architecture).

3.2 CAPACities Alpine context

CAPACities Alpine context covers the 52% of the whole area included in the Alpine Convention (A.C.) and it groups 3,564 municipalities, equal to the 61 % of all Alpine municipalities, included into the A.C. borders.

Table 2 - Area and number of municipalities included in the Alpine Convention Area				
State	Alpine area (included in the A.C.)		N° of alpine municipalities	
	Area (km ²)	Percentage	Number	Percentage
France	40,771	21	1,748	30
Monaco	2	0	1	0
Italy	51,996	27	1,755	30
Switzerland	25,248	13	829	14
Liechtenstein	160	0	11	0
Slovenia	7,789	4	61	1
Austria	54,576	29	1,146	20
Germany	11,141	6	290	5
Total	191,683	100	5,841	100

Time references and source: 2009 – GfK GeoMarketing

The number of Alpine municipalities is quite similar in France (1,748) and Italy (1,755), even if the Italian Alpine area is 10,000 km² wider than the French one (Italian area: 51,996 km²; French area: 40,771 km²).

The number of inhabitants in Italy (4,293,233 in 2008) is 40% higher than in France (2,588,037 in 2006).

Slovenia has different features: Alps spread over 7,669 km² and this area is divided into 61 municipalities. Slovenian Alpine inhabitants are 665,021, according to 2008 data.

Considering the municipalities demographic size according to thresholds fixed in paragraph 1, it's interesting to point out the main differences among these alpine contexts: moving from West to East, from France to Slovenia, the average number of inhabitants per municipality grows (from 933 in Liguria to 10,902 in Slovenia).

Overall about 90% of CAPACities municipalities have up to 5.000 inhabitants (the only areas with lower rates are Veneto, 80%, and Slovenia, 40%). In these municipalities live more than the 45% of Alpine population (except for Slovenia, 12%).

Table 3 - CAPACities Alps: resident population and average number per municipality			
NUTS 2	N° of municipalities	Resident population (n°)	Average number per municipality (n°)
France	1,748	2,588,037	1,481
P.A.C.A.	640	686,548	1,073
Rhône Alpes	1,108	1,901,489	1,716
Italy	1,755	4,293,233	2,446
Liguria	81	75,561	933
Piemonte	482	848,616	1,761
Valle d'Aosta	74	125,979	1,702
Lombardia	516	1,278,509	2,478
Trentino A.A.	339	1,007,267	2,971
Veneto	171	736,389	4,306
Friuli V.G.	92	220,912	2,401
Slovenia	61	665,021	10,902
Total	3,564	7,546,291	2,961

Time references and source: France: 2006 – www.insee.fr; Italy: 2008 – www.demostat.it; Slovenia: 2008 – www.stat.si

Table 4 - CAPACities Alps: number of municipalities by demographic size and inhabitants								
	Small centres		Medium centres		Large centres		Extra Large centres	
	n°	pop.	n°	pop.	n°	pop.	n°	pop.
France	1,238	432,538	418	878,257	79	715,315	13	561,927
P.A.C.A.	483	142,787	139	295,359	15	152,820	3	95,582
Rhône A.	755	289,751	279	582,898	64	562,495	10	466,345
Italy	794	388,796	787	1,810,041	157	1,395,033	17	699,363
Liguria	60	29,663	20	38,563	1	7,335	0	0
Piemonte	293	118,326	153	345,110	34	303,911	2	81,269
V. d'Aosta	43	20,055	30	71,198	0	0	1	34,726
Lombardia	195	102,368	258	597,148	61	532,817	2	46,176
Trentino A.A.	131	75,923	177	392,739	26	232,006	5	306,599
Veneto	31	18,515	107	279,768	27	243,623	6	194,483
Friuli V.G.	41	23,946	42	85,515	8	75,341	1	36,110
Slovenia	2	1,233	22	75,630	30	292,235	7	295,923

Time references and source: France: 2006 – www.insee.fr; Italy: 2008 – www.demostat.it; Slovenia: 2008 – www.stat.si

Table 5 - CAPACities Alps: percentage of municipalities by demographic size and resident population

	Small centres		Medium centres		Large centres		Extra Large centres	
	% munic.	% pop..	% munic.	% pop.	% munic.	% pop.	% munic.	% pop.
France	70.80	16.71	23.90	33.94	4.50	27.64	0.70	21.71
P.A.C.A.	75.47	20.80	21.72	43.02	2.34	22.26	0.47	13.92
Rhône A.	68.14	15.24	25.18	30.65	5.78	29.58	0.90	24.53
Italy	45.20	9.06	44.80	42.16	8.90	32.49	1.00	16.29
Liguria	74.07	39.26	24.69	51.04	1.23	9.71	0.00	0.00
Piemonte	60.79	13.94	31.74	40.67	7.05	35.81	0.41	9.58
V. d'Aosta	58.11	15.92	40.54	56.52	0.00	0.00	1.35	27.56
Lombardia	37.79	8.01	50.00	46.71	11.82	41.67	0.39	3.61
Trentino A.A.	38.64	7.54	52.21	38.99	7.67	23.03	1.47	30.44
Veneto	18.13	2.51	62.57	37.99	15.79	33.08	3.51	26.41
Friuli V.G.	44.57	10.84	45.65	38.71	8.70	34.10	1.09	16.35
Slovenia	3.28	0.19	36.07	11.37	49.18	43.94	11.48	44.50

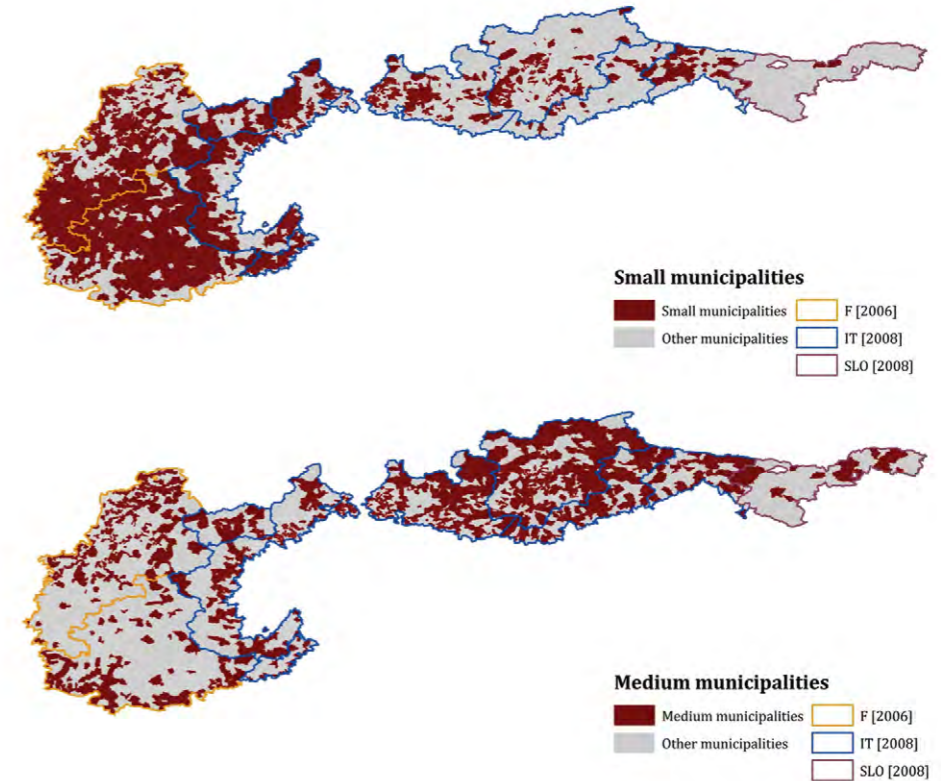
Time references and source: France: 2006 – www.insee.fr; Italy: 2008 – www.demoistat.it; Slovenia: 2008 – www.stat.si

Small (< 1.000 inhabitants) and medium (1.000 – 5.000 inhabitants) municipalities cover more than the 80% of the Alpine landscape area (except for Slovenia): in particular, the 50% of the territory of Western Alps is covered by small municipalities, and the same percentage of medium municipalities characterizes the Central-Eastern Italian side.

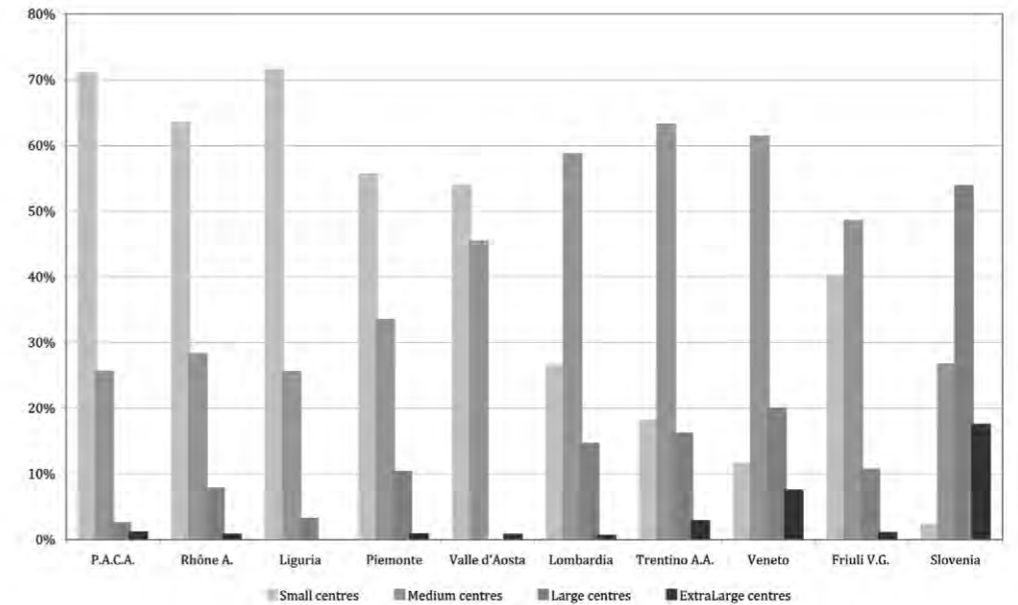
Table 6 - CAPACities area according to different classes of municipalities

CAPACities area	km ²	%
Small centres (pop. < 1,000)	45,089	44.89
Medium centres (pop. 1,000 – 5,000)	39,662	39.49
Large centres (pop. 5,000 – 20,000)	12,922	12.87
Extra-large centres (pop. > 20,000)	2,765	2.75
Total	100,439	100.00

Time references and source: inhabitants, see references in Table 3; area, see references in Table 3



[Fig. 1 Urban centres in CAPACities Alps (Map basis: GfK GeoMarketing)]



[Fig. 2 Percentage of CAPACities Alps (surface) covered by municipalities according to their demographic size]

Table 7 - Area (km²) and percentage of the CAPACities Alps covered by municipalities according to their demographic size

	Total surface (km ²)	Small centres		Medium centres		Large centres		ExtraLarge centres	
		Surf.	%	Surf.	%	Surf.	%	Surf.	%
France	40,754	27,414	67.27	10,934	26.83	2,051	5.03	355	0.87
P.A.C.A.	20,703	14,699	71.00	5,281	25.51	505	2.44	219	1.06
Rhône A.	20,051	12,715	63.41	5,654	28.20	1,547	7.71	136	0.68
Italy	52,001	17,493	33.64	26,683	51.31	6,749	12.98	1,076	2.07
Liguria	1,570	1,121	71.39	400	25.47	49	3.14	0	0.00
Piemonte	12,639	7,022	55.56	4,225	33.43	1,296	10.25	97	0.76
V. d'Aosta	3,259	1,757	53.92	1,480	45.42	0	0.00	21	0.66
Lombardia	9,808	2,591	26.41	5,745	58.57	1,421	14.49	52	0.53
Trentino A.A.	13,606	2,456	18.05	8,591	63.14	2,187	16.07	372	2.73
Veneto	6,671	765	11.46	4,088	61.28	1,326	19.87	493	7.39
Friuli V.G.	4,448	1,782	40.06	2,155	48.45	470	10.57	41	0.92
Slovenia	7,642	172	2.25	2,033	26.61	4,109	53.77	1,328	17.38

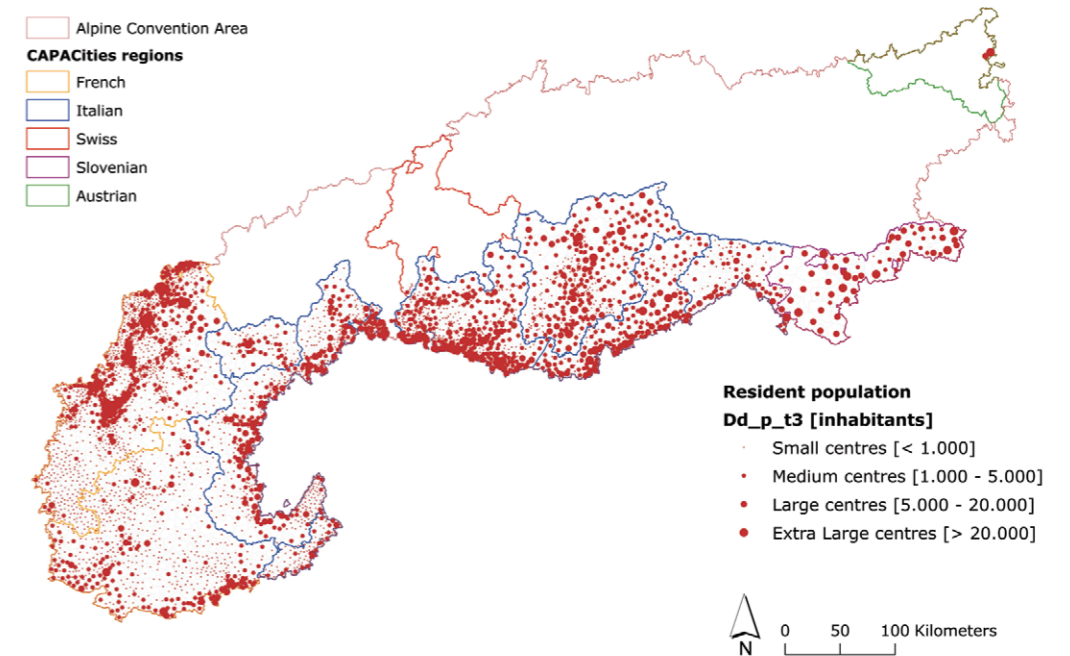
Time references and source: area 2009 – GfK GeoMarketing; Municipalities demographic size France: 2006 – www.insee.fr; Italy: 2008 – www.demostat.it; Slovenia: 2008 – www.stat.si

This synthetic information supports the general idea of different Alpine contexts, according to historical influences (Bätzing, 2005) which affected (also) the geo-political framework: smaller municipalities in the western part of the Alps, characterized by the Romanic influence, and bigger municipalities in the eastern part, under the Germanic influence.

These main differences can be caught both from data and from maps, which suggest also others characterizations of the Alps: in addition to the specificities of Slovenian Alps (characterized by a small number of municipalities, larger and more populated than the French and the Italian ones), it is possible to distinguish different geographies characterizing regions, macro-regions, the inner part of the Alps (core), the borders, etc.

The edge of the A.C. area, as fig. 3 shows, is characterised by a high density of large municipalities: this phenomenon is much more evident in the Italian Alps than in the French ones (Côte d'Azur and near Marseille), with regional differences between Lombardia and Veneto, in comparison with Piemonte and Friuli Venezia Giulia where conurbation along the peri-alpine area is less evident.

In France, and in particular in Rhône Alpes region, large municipalities gather in inner valleys such as the vicinity of Grenoble; this happens also in some Italian valleys (Adige Valley, Valtellina and others), but in general this phenomenon is less evident.



[Fig. 3 Urban centres in CAPACities Alps (Map basis: GfK GeoMarketing)]

French regions and the western Italian regions are characterized by small municipalities' dispersion; moving from the Western to the Eastern Alps the average demographic size of municipalities increases.

3.3 Demographic dynamics

The analysis of demographic dynamics puts in evidence that similar contexts are often characterized by different trends.

Considering the population growth rate² in the last two decades, it's interesting to note that the number of inhabitants is growing in French, Italian, and Slovenian Alps but with many different features:

- French Alpine municipalities grow with higher rates (average municipal increase equal to 29%), in comparison with the Italian (5%) and the Slovenian (4,5%) ones;
- French regions grow both in the inner areas and in the border ones;
- Piemonte and Liguria show dynamics of depopulation, especially in the inner parts of the Alpine territory; this dynamic of population decrease in the inner part of the Alps and of population growth along borders can be traced also in other Italian regions, as Lombardia, Veneto and Friuli Venezia Giulia (Piemonte and Friuli Venezia Giulia show situations of serious depopulation);
- Italian Alpine regions (Valle d'Aosta and Trentino Alto Adige whose whole territory

² Population growth rate is calculated as:

Pop. grow rate = [(resident pop. t1 - resident pop. t0)/(resident pop. t0)] x 100, where t1 is the latest year and t0 is the oldest year.

is included in the Alpine Convention Area) show trends of population increase; vice versa, as above, regions with both mountain and plain areas present dynamics of demographic suffering in the whole mountain area or in parts of it.

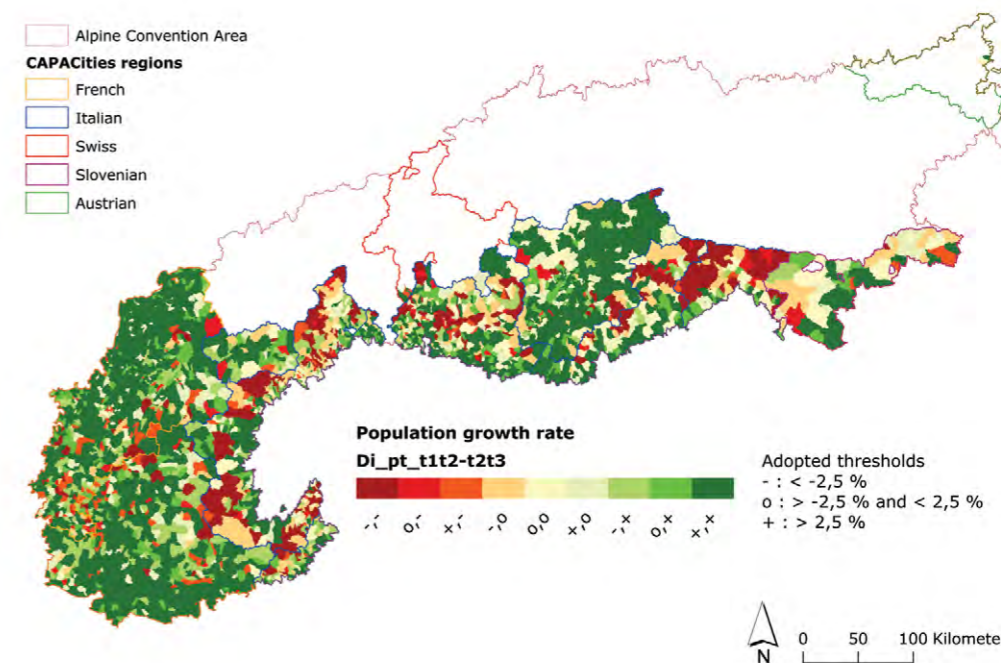
Table 8 - CAPACities Alps: population growth rate, long period (percentage, t1-t3)					
	Small centres	Medium centres	Large centres	Extra large centres	Average value
France	30.78	24.56	11.27	7.07	28.70
P.A.C.A.	30.37	24.35	11.97	17.25	28.93
Rhône Alpes	31.04	24.65	11.10	4.81	28.57
Italy	1.50	9.00	9.29	2.49	5.42
Liguria	4.35	12.25	-0.35	-	6.05
Piemonte	-4.89	5.40	5.15	-2.54	-1.03
Valle d'Aosta	10.04	15.49		-4.11	11.83
Lombardia	4.31	9.72	7.86	0.99	7.29
Trentino A.A.	11.73	13.61	18.90	8.51	13.10
Veneto	-3.81	7.48	11.71	3.35	6.00
Friuli V.G.	-13.39	-2.04	2.96	-6.22	-6.28
Slovenia	1.73	1.41	7.45	1.65	4.51

Time references and source: France: 1990/2006 – www.insee.fr; Italy: 1991/2008 – www.istat.it/www.demostat.it; Slovenia: 1991/2008 – www.stat.si

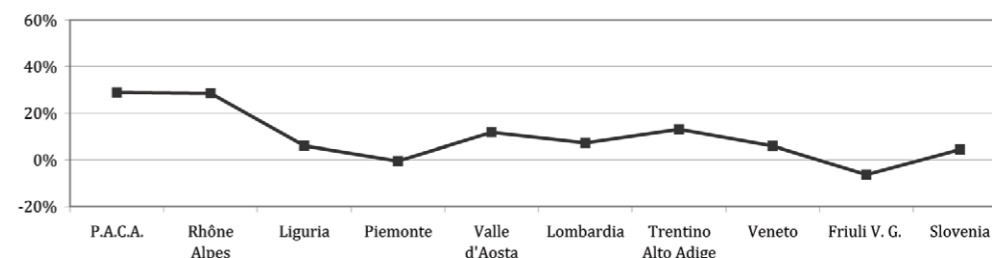
Figure 5 shows average values registered by the population growth index in the long period according to regional scale and helps to interpret regional trends represented in figure 4³, while figure 4 shows the indicator's values registered in to two different periods: trend registered per municipality during the Nineties and trend registered per municipality during the first decade of the new Millennium (France: 1990/1999 – 1999/2006; Italy: 1991-2001 – 2001/2008; Slovenia: 1991/2002 – 2002/2008). In particular, the map shows:

- phenomena of depopulation (population growth rate < -2,5% in both periods considered);
- phenomena of tendential decreasing in population (population growth rate < -2,5% in the last period considered);
- zero population growth (population growth rate > -2,5% and < + 2,5% in both periods considered);
- phenomena of tendential growth (population growth rate > 2,5% in the last period considered);
- phenomena of population growth (population growth rate > 2,5% in both periods considered).

³ Time references and sources: France, t1 - 1990, t2 - 1999, t3 - 2006, source www.insee.fr; Italy, t1 - 1991, t2 - 2001, t3 - 2008, source www.istat.it and www.demostat.it (2008); Slovenia, t1 - 1991, t2 - 2002, t3 - 2008, source www.staat.si.



[Fig. 4 CAPACities Alps: population growth rate t1-t2, t2-t3 (Map basis: GfK GeoMarketing)]



[Fig. 5 CAPACities regions: average population growth rate t1-t3]

Resident population is growing in both French regions, without differences between peri-alpine areas and inner areas. Italian alpine municipalities show positive dynamics of growth mainly along the southern boundary of the Alpine Convention area, that means close to the plain. Considering average trends occurring in the different classes of municipalities it emerges that:

- small French municipalities, especially in Rhône Alpes region, grow more than the larger ones;
- small Italian municipalities show limited trends of population increase, while in Piemonte and Friuli Venezia Giulia depopulation dynamics are going on;
- in many Alpine regions largest municipalities are facing trends of depopulation.

Comparing the population growth rate with a structural indicator, the elderly index⁴, it emerges that population in Italian Alpine municipalities is older than the French and Slovenian ones. In Italy on average for each young person there are two elderly (average elderly index in Italian Alpine municipalities is equal to 195), while in French Alpine municipalities for every young there is an aged person (average elderly index equal to 110) and in Slovenian Alpine territory the balance is in the young's favour (average elderly index equal to 93).

Analyzing regional features, it emerges that:

- regions showing the best trends in population growth are also the youngest ones, as Rhône Alpes and Trentino Alto Adige;
- in P.A.C.A., Valle d'Aosta, Lombardia and Veneto every three elderly there are two young;
- Piemonte and Friuli Venezia Giulia show, again, the most problematic trends: elderly, in addition to population decrease.

Table 9 - CAPACities Alps: elderly index in municipalities by demographic size

	Small centres	Medium centres	Large centres	Extra large centres	Average value
France	119.66	84.92	86.75	104.38	109.75
P.A.C.A.	151.63	114.47	105.84	108.13	142.28
Rhône Alpes	99.21	70.20	82.27	103.26	90.96
Italy	261.26	140.16	132.81	167.29	195.41
Liguria	347.87	218.11	216.58	-	315.81
Piemonte	364.09	183.78	166.41	207.52	293.08
Valle d'Aosta	163.39	132.24	-	191.91	151.57
Lombardia	191.55	126.49	125.98	130.73	151.67
Trentino A.A.	127.59	97.39	92.90	145.71	109.77
Veneto	194.95	145.39	125.27	164.59	151.88
Friuli V.G.	334.69	200.90	167.28	235.13	254.70
Slovenia	107.76	94.18	90.89	98.35	93.43

Time references and source: France: 2006 – www.insee.fr; Italy: 2001 – www.istat.it; Slovenia: 2002 – www.stat.si

Analyzing average trends occurring in the different classes of municipalities, according to their demographic size, it is possible to notice that:

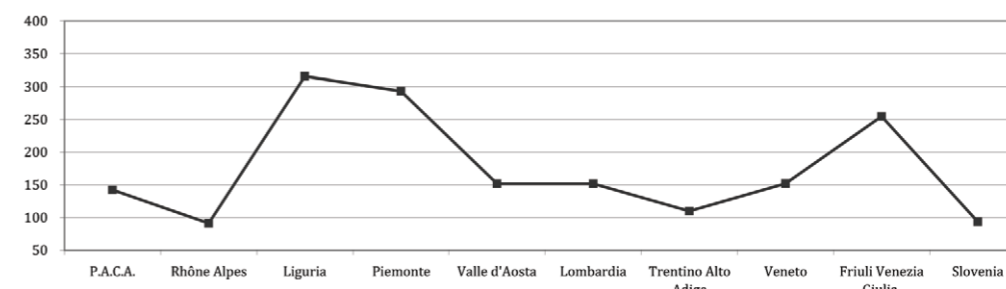
- in France the balance between elderly and young is quite similar in the different classes of municipalities (except for P.A.C.A. small municipalities);
- in Italy the smaller is the municipality, the higher is the elderly index value: small and

⁴ Elderly index is calculated as:

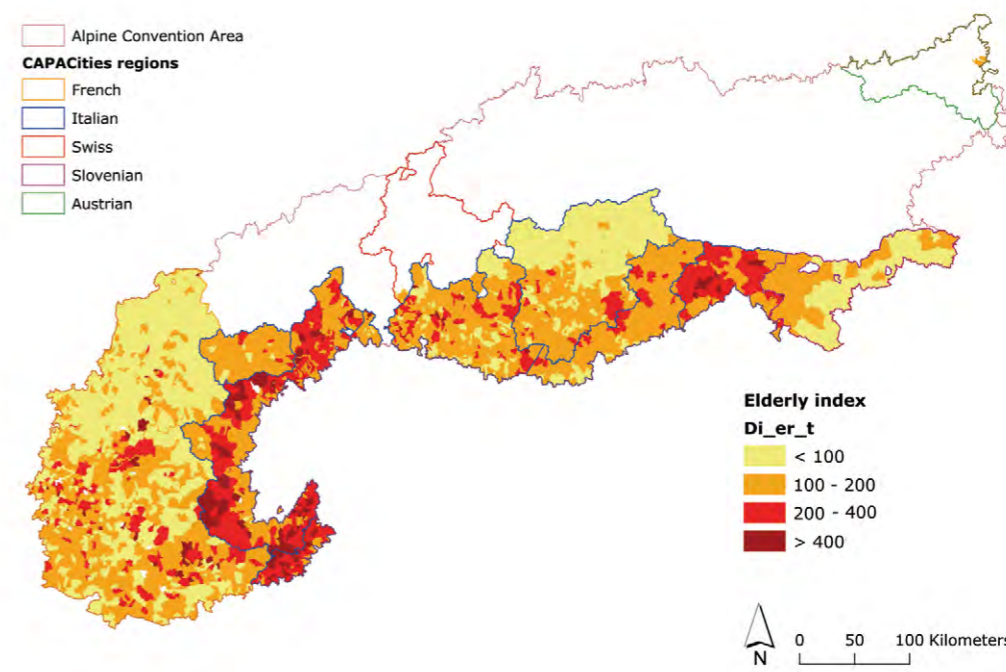
$$\text{Elderly index} = \frac{(\text{resident pop.} > 64)}{(\text{resident pop.} < 15)} \times 100$$

medium municipalities of Liguria, Piemonte and Friuli Venezia Giulia show the highest values of this indicator (more than 3 elderly every young in small municipalities, and about two elderly every young in medium municipalities).

Data suggest that regional administrative limits (NUTS 2) represent the “watershed” between territories characterized by different problems, despite their common/similar geography, landscape and culture: this is particularly evident in figures 6 and 7 (for instance, see the border between French and Italian Alps).



[Fig. 6 CAPACities regions: average elderly index]



[Fig. 7 CAPACities Alps: elderly index (Map basis: GfK GeoMarketing)]

3.4 Economic trends

Job centrality index⁵ measures municipalities' economic attractiveness in terms of job opportunities for their population.

Table 10 - CAPACities Alps: job centrality in municipalities by demographic size					
	Small centres	Medium centres	Large centres	Extra large centres	Average value
France	37.30	48.73	73.27	77.85	41.96
P.A.C.A.	38.50	43.31	72.63	80.48	40.54
Rhône Alpes	36.54	51.43	73.42	77.07	42.78
Italy	48.89	54.74	60.58	76.33	52.71
Liguria	41.55	48.01	28.29	-	42.90
Piemonte	53.74	55.10	58.82	79.86	54.62
Valle d'Aosta	63.24	69.21	-	81.46	65.82
Lombardia	41.17	49.30	56.77	76.45	47.01
Trentino A.A.	48.56	59.34	70.12	82.77	56.03
Veneto	51.51	59.76	62.60	71.75	59.04
Friuli V.G.	46.09	48.19	62.29	61.06	48.82
Slovenia	37.08	40.33	46.16	57.78	45.19

Time references and source: France: 2006 – www.insee.fr; Italy: 2001 – www.istat.it; Slovenia: 2002 – www.stat.si

Analyzing the data reported above, it emerges that while in French regions, where demographic indicators perform better, the job centrality average value is the lowest; the opposite happens in some Italian regions (in particular Piemonte and Veneto). Secondly, this time as it was expected, job opportunities grow according to the municipalities demographic size, as showed in Table 10.

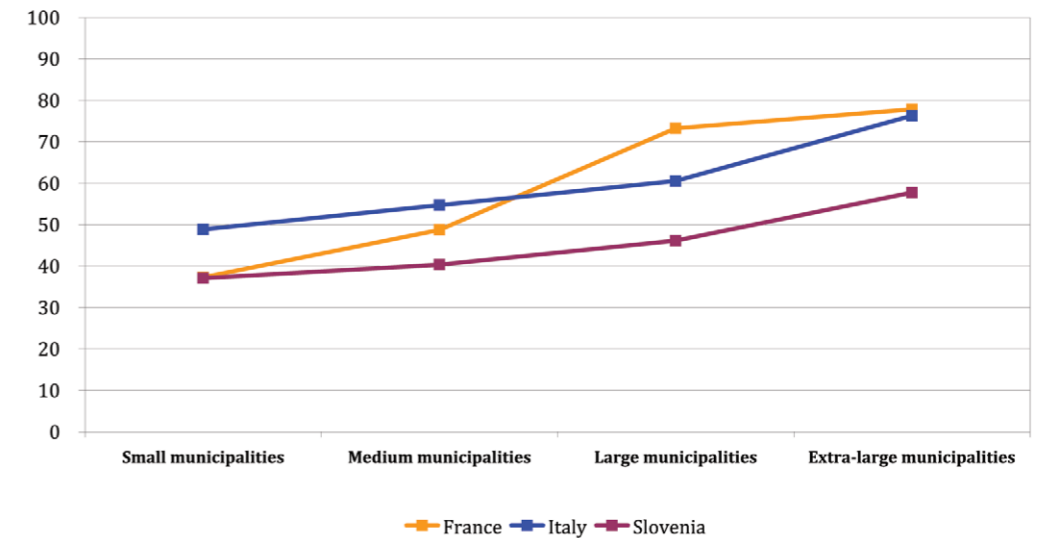
High values of job centrality index mean that municipalities are attractive and competitive from an economic point of view. The data analyzed in the previous paragraph show that there are other conditions, of different nature, that make municipalities attractive and competitive, and that have repercussions on demographic trends.

As a consequence, municipalities that are attractive from a residential point of view but not from an economic point of view, should be affected by relevant commuting dynamics. Regional average values registered by the out commuting index⁶ are quite similar for all the

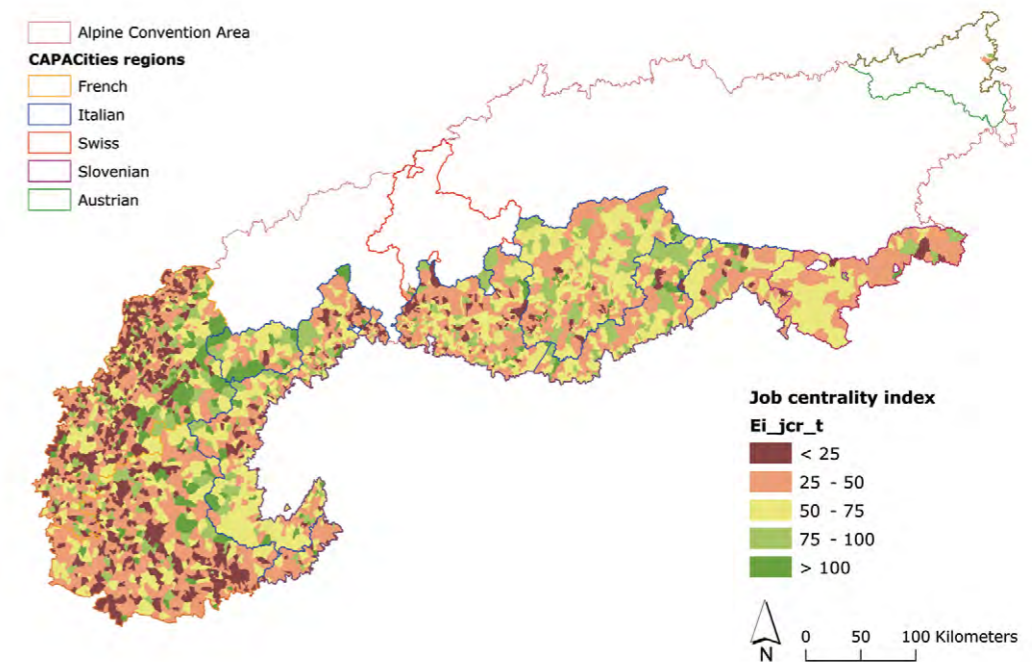
⁵ Job centrality index is calculated as:

Job centrality index = [(total number of jobs)/(resident population 15-64)]x100.

⁶ Out commuting index is calculated as:

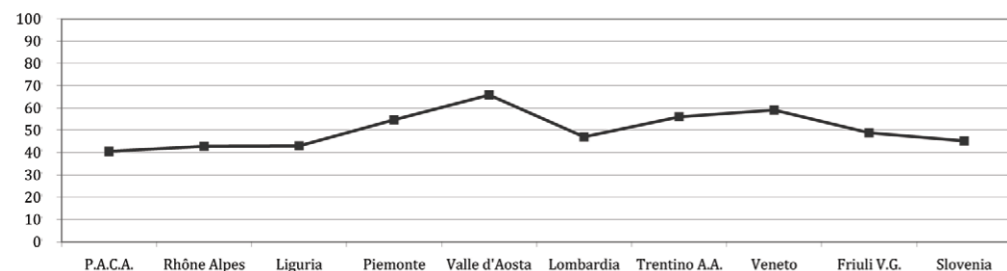


[Fig. 8 CAPACities states: job centrality in municipalities by demographic size]



[Fig. 9 CAPACities Alps: job centrality index (Map basis: GfK GeoMarketing)]

Alpine regions considered, varying from 24 to 28, except for Rhône Alpes where the highest value is reported (32), supporting the hypothesis formulated, Lombardia (31) and Slovenia where the lowest value is recorded (20).



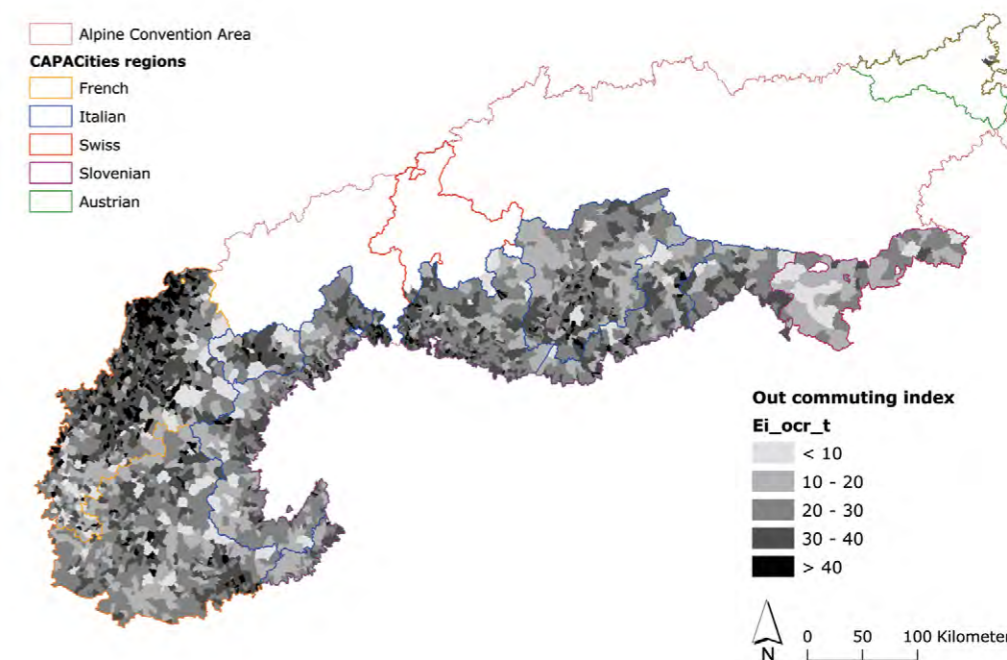
[Fig. 10 CAPACities regions: average job centrality]

Table 11 - CAPACities Alps: out commuting index in municipalities grouped by demographic size

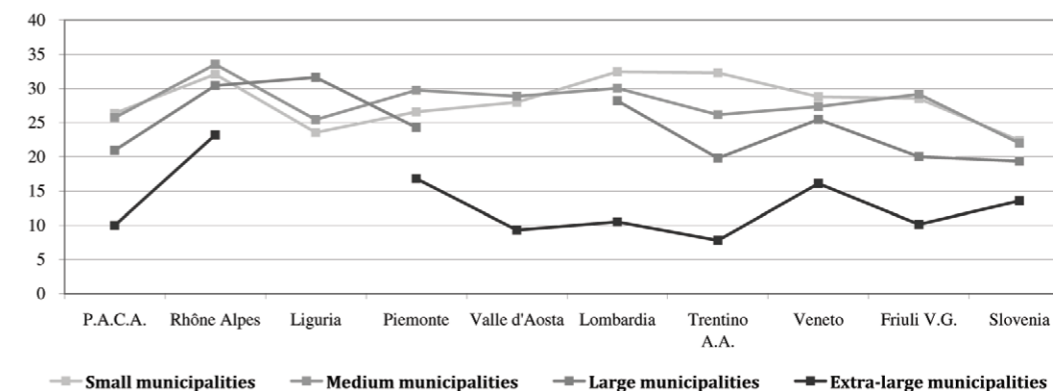
	Small centres	Medium centres	Large centres	Extra large centres	Average value
France	29.86	30.96	28.64	20.16	30.06
P.A.C.A.	26.37	25.74	20.94	9.98	26.03
Rhône Alpes	32.09	33.55	30.44	23.21	32.40
Italy	29.02	28.54	24.99	12.38	28.33
Liguria	23.55	25.43	31.63	-	24.09
Piemonte	26.57	29.75	24.30	16.81	27.39
Valle d'Aosta	27.98	28.87	-	9.29	28.08
Lombardia	32.44	30.02	28.19	10.51	30.70
Trentino A.A.	32.29	26.14	19.81	7.80	27.96
Veneto	28.78	27.35	25.46	16.09	26.99
Friuli V.G.	28.51	29.16	20.02	10.12	27.78
Slovenia	22.39	21.98	19.36	13.55	19.69

Time references and source: France: 2006 – www.insee.fr; Italy: 2001 – www.istat.it; Slovenia: 2002 – www.stat.si

It's very interesting to analyse the regional values of the out commuting index according to different classes of municipalities: again, as for the job centrality index, where the difference of the average value for each class of municipality is wider, the polarization between centres is greater; where the gap is smaller, higher is the equilibrium between centres of different size. This means that in the second case competitiveness and attractiveness are much more



[Fig. 11 CAPACities Alps: out commuting index (Map basis: GfK GeoMarketing)]



[Fig. 12 CAPACities regions: out commuting index in municipalities by demographic size]

spread among centres.

Rhône Alpes and Trentino Alto Adige, the two regions characterized by the best demographic indicators, show interesting features:

- in Trentino Alto Adige job opportunities grow and the rate of out commuters decreases by the increasing of municipalities' demographic size;
- in Rhône Alpes the out commuting index is quite similar in small, medium and large municipalities and is just a little smaller in extra-large municipalities. In this region the self-containment of work-force (among centres of different demographic size) seems to be lower in comparison with other Alpine regions.

From an economic point of view it's possible to distinguish between situations of competitiveness and attractiveness polarized in some municipalities in French regions, Piemonte, and Lombardia, and situations of spread competitiveness and attractiveness in Trentino Alto Adige and Veneto municipalities.

In addition it's important to point out that while extra-large municipalities in P.A.C.A., Valle d'Aosta, Lombardia, Trentino Alto Adige and Friuli Venezia Giulia show a self-containment of workforce, extra-large municipalities in Rhône Alpes, Piemonte, Veneto (and with a lesser extent in Slovenia) show a stronger reliance on other extra-alpine municipalities.

3.6 Final remarks

The geo-political, demographic and economic portrait provided for CAPACities Alps and functional to the AS-SLUCs characterization, raises some issues and requires some final remarks.

The Alpine area is highly fragmented in small and medium centres, that are asked to carry out the main planning and administrative functions. Around the 84% of municipalities belonging to CAPACities area of analysis have a population smaller than 5.000. For example in the Italian administrative context, administrative bodies are weak in terms of technical competences and resources, and suffer from increasing cuts in their budget. This seems the cause of an increasing weakness in territory management and a reduction of services granted to local communities.

Another relevant consideration is related to local policies. Despite of the demographic size of municipalities which increases moving from the Western part of the Alps to the Eastern, current demographic and economic dynamics appear strictly related to regional influences and policies. This shows how local policies have played and still play a key role, probably stronger than the historical and cultural traditions.

Moreover, local policies provided by regions completely inside the Alps, as Trentino Alto Adige and Valle d'Aosta, have proved more effective in keeping their territory attractive and competitive from a demographic and economic point of view. It is possible to suppose that administering a homogeneous, wholly alpine territory makes the public regional authority's governance role easier.

Another relevant remark raising from the analysis regards French Alpine territory: small municipalities register the best demographic performances, confuting the widespread idea that considers small Alpine centres affected by depopulation, ageing processes and economic suffering. This could find some explanation in the accessibility policies activated in French regions: good public (or private) accessibility to inner Alpine areas has produced wide commuters areas.

Policies oriented to improve accessibility seem to have produced an attractiveness in French Alps, based more on residential functions rather than economic ones. In Italy this partially happens only along the edges of the Alpine Convention area, close to extra-alpine megacities. Peculiarities characterizing the different geo-political contexts, lead to remind that coordinated local and regional policies are strategic in this unique, wide area, that is so special and complex.

The capability of managing all the Alpine resources (environmental, cultural, architectural, economic, etc.) and implementing innovative strategies are key factors in order to keep Alps attractive, first of all for people who choose to live there.

4 pilot actions

Authors

Parts 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6 by René Guerin (CAUE84).

Part 4.7 by Paolo Zeppetella (RP).

The presentations of Pilot Projects (part 4.2) have been written by all CAPACities partners.

All the images are by CAPACities partners, except for the pictures of Prata Camportaccio (by Stefano Gusmeroli) and those of Walser (by Gianni Thumiger)

4.1 Introduction

This chapter contains a first comparative evaluation of Pilot Projects experiences. It must be underlined that, due to CAPACities schedule, there has not been enough time between the end of Pilot Projects and the evaluation, so it would be scientifically inappropriate to talk about Pilot Projects assessment. In fact such a short time lapse makes it almost impossible to analyse the impact of the Pilot Projects, the side effects they produced, the institutional learning they generated, and so on.

The core of the analysis can then be the policy processes started, the approaches adopted, the interactions they had with existing policies. The elements extracted from each case are those that bear a more general relevance at an Alpine Space scale.

The Alpine Space represents a heterogeneous region as long as the competitiveness of its territories is concerned. It depends mainly on geographical context, natural and human resources, and presence of infrastructures. If the competitiveness of the larger Alpine Space towns can be assessed by demographic growth, number and quality of jobs, level of education, number and quality of services, influence area, and quality of life, the competitiveness evaluation of the Alpine Space small urban centres (AS-SLUCs) needs a specific, local approach: because no absolute criterion to define the AS-SLUCs competitiveness can be found.

For example, the competitiveness of the main centre of an isolated mountain territory, far from important towns, can be ascribed to a high level of services it provides to a large influence area; whereas the competitiveness of a secondary urban centre located near a metropolis may be due to the high quality of jobs that are a consequence of its proximity to important industries and services. In some cases, the competitiveness of an AS-SLUC may be attributed to the existence of specific know-how and specialized jobs, linked to the exploitation of local resources, and/or an industrial tradition. Thus, there are numerous criteria to define the competitiveness of AS-SLUCs, and infinite means to improve it.

4.2 Actions for competitiveness improvement

General goals

Five types of Pilot Projects can be recognised, according to the approach that has been locally chosen to improve competitiveness, and the goals that have been consequently set:

1. innovative actions and tools in urban or territorial plans to enhance local potential, and drive, at the local level, the transformations needed to take advantage of large-scale opportunities.
2. innovative target-group (women, youth, aged people) policies implying participation in territorial development processes.
3. integrated strategic local actions and plans to improve quality of life and competitiveness of Alpine centres.
4. integrated strategic regional actions and plans to improve quality of life and competitiveness of Alpine centres.
5. sustainable exploitation of Alpine cultural, environmental, landscape, tourism and entrepreneurial resources.

Nevertheless, it must be noted that some Pilot Projects are developed within the framework of several types of action at once; for instance, some Pilot Projects tried simultaneously to attain the goals 1, 3, and 5.

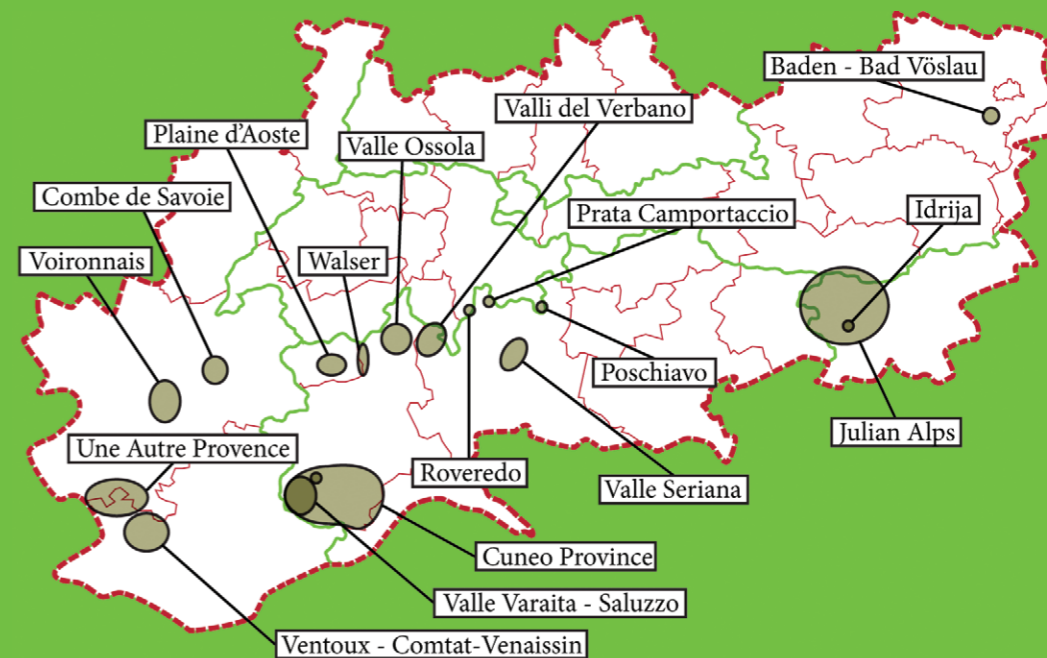
Table 1 Pilot Projects' goals					
	1	2	3	4	5
RL-Prata Camportaccio	✓				
RL-Verbano			✓		
RL-Seriana					✓
LI-Bad Vöslau			✓		
AMGI-Idrija					✓
NTA-Julian Alps					✓
IUG-Combe de Savoie				✓	
IUG-Voironnais				✓	
CAUE84-autre Provence	✓				
CAUE84-CoVe			✓		
LAMORO-Cuneo		✓			
RAVDA-Plaine d'Aoste	✓				
RAVDA-Walser		✓			✓
RP-Valle Ossola	✓		✓		✓
RP-Valle Varaita - Saluzzo	✓		✓		✓
GR-Poschiavo	✓				
GR-Roveredo	✓				

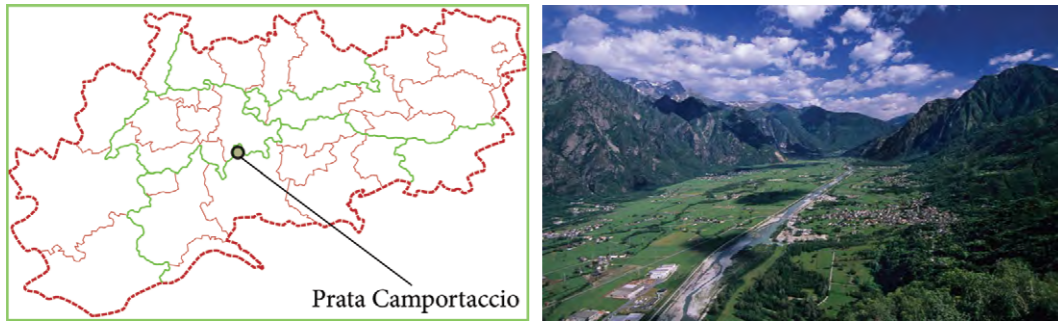
Pilot Projects description

In the next pages each Pilot Project will be briefly described, according to the following outline:

- the territorial context in which the Pilot Project took place;
- a brief description of the implemented activities;
- the approach adopted;
- the tools used (or conceived) for carrying out the Pilot Project's activities;
- the outputs produced.

4.3 CAPACities Pilot Projects areas





Regione Lombardia, Italy (RL) - Place-making in Chiavenna Valley (Prata Camportaccio). Environment and heritage recovery for the valley bottom and mountainsides

The main focus of the project is on Prata Camportaccio (2,790 inhabitants in 2008), a small town adjoining Chiavenna, in the Province of Sondrio. The target area includes five more municipalities: Mese (1,687 inhabitants), Gordona (1,818), Samolaco (2,950), Verceia (1,089) and Novate Mezzola (1,799). The six municipalities (having an extension of 23,760 ha) share a very important resource (from an ecological, environmental, cultural point of view): the Chiavenna Plain (CP), an “Alpine plain” that designates the middle section of the Valley. The plain covers 3,183 ha (approximately the 13% of the target area).

The Plain is a unique resource, which has conserved its environmental, ecological and landscape values, included in Natura 2000 network as a Site of Community Importance (SCI). But residential, industrial and commercial activities are pressing to appropriate the Plain for building purposes. Data related to land use changes (according to regional land cover maps DUSAF 1, 1999, and DUSAF 2.1, 2007) show that in Gordona, Mese, Prata Camportaccio, Samolaco e Verceia more than the 90% of the urbanization between 1999 and 2007 occurred in the Plain; in Novate Mezzola it was more than 70%. These data highlight how it is important that the municipalities take care of the Plain, preserving its values and its unity.

The Municipality of Prata Camportaccio has been involved in the definition of a strategy for the CP, which starts from the creation of an inter-municipal commission whose aim is firstly to create a common knowledge on the CP in terms of resources and problems, and secondly to share operative goals.

During some meetings with the Mayor of Prata Camportaccio objectives and action lines were set and shared. The key concept was to put together experiences, ideas and projects concerning the Plain and the system of activities (existing and potential) related to it.

A series of meetings has then been scheduled, including two brainstorming sessions that involved both counsellors and officers from local authorities. The first meeting was functional to acquire knowledge and to discuss about the Plain: strategies already adopted by municipalities, goals, problems, etc. The second meeting was meant to share operative goals.

Three basic strategies to involve different stakeholders in taking care of the CP were adopted: The first strategy was to prepare a CP map with no trace of municipal borders in order to convey new concepts. Furthermore it was useful to spread awareness on the extension of the CP. The absence of borders helped to reverse some common perceptions: marginalities have been turned into centralities.

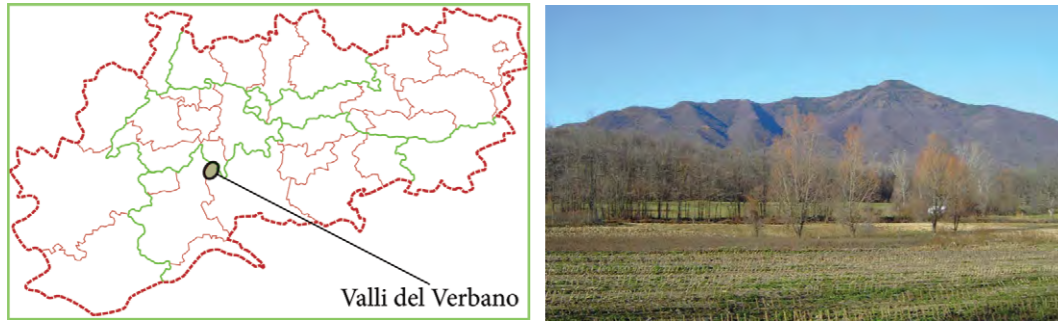
The second strategy was to interview key policy makers and other local stakeholders in order to increase knowledge and to understand expectations and potentialities which can improve the attractiveness and competitiveness of the CP.

The third strategy was the realization of a guidebook, working together with policy actors and local stakeholders: the guidebook describes the Plain, with its resources and its problems, for the first time as a unitary area, rich in potentialities. The CP is more than a crossing area, a disadvantaged and intermediate territory between Como lake and the ski resorts. The guidebook represents the opportunity to lay the foundations for a cooperative approach in territorial governance, breaking free from the condition of “middle land” and transit area. Moreover, the book proposes strategic approaches to enhance local resources and overcome problems of the six municipalities, improving territorial attractiveness and competitiveness. For example, proposed approaches can be put into action adopting new measures for the environmental protection of the Plain, or improving cycle tracks.

Outputs include:

- the establishment of an inter-municipal, non-binding, commission including local counsellors and officers, who discussed (and will go on discussing) about the Plain as a unique area;
- the publication of a guidebook describing the Plain as a unitary area, rich in potentialities and suitable to act as catalyst of new interests. The guide collects, organizes and spreads knowledge that today is fragmented, hidden or at risk of being lost. It also provides an opportunity to increase cooperation between policy makers;
- the promotion, start-up, and guidance of an inter-municipal planning process, taking care of the distinctive character of the CP, which can be recognised as an area worth of protection being one of the few residual examples of such kind of Alpine landscape.





Regione Lombardia, Italy (RL) - Innovating and integrating community services for urban and environmental quality in Verbano Valleys

The project area encompasses 34 municipalities with a population of 77,400, within the jurisdiction of the newly constituted Verbano Valleys Mountain Community. It includes two valleys stretching from the eastern bank of Lake Maggiore to the Swiss border. The area features an unbalanced development history – a few leading centres (either counting on tourism development or hosting a number of leading industries) as well as relatively disadvantaged areas.

The project basically aimed at providing technical support to the decision makers and leading representatives of the Verbano Valleys Mountain Community in their effort towards organizing the newly established offices of the Mountain Community, by providing some strategic perspectives and a proper information basis. There is in fact a chance that the Mountain community may turn into an agency capable of assisting small municipalities in the area, and staging new projects of inter-municipal service provision. Actually, poor staffing and low expertise make almost all municipalities in the area unfit to deal properly, at the technical level, with the design, financing, regulation and provision of community services: this ultimately calls for a new coordination role. The Mountain Community could on this regard be suited to work as a proper “institutional locus”.

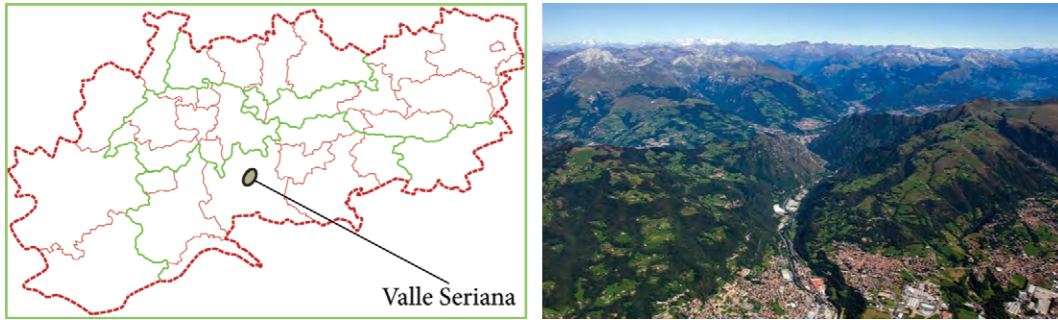
The goal is to challenge local policy makers with a novel perspective on public service organization, and produce a shift in the political discourses and the Mountain Community agenda. Essentially, to face social diversity, and the high degree of administrative fragmentation (municipalities, a provincial govt., school districts...), a “rescaling” of public service provision may be considered a viable option. This means that service provision should be related to places, not bound to administrative jurisdictions. It is also suggested that the geography of local government divisions in the area might be subjected to functional changes.

The Pilot Project revolved around two main issues. Firstly, local community needs and quality requirements call for a proper survey on the current offer and organisation of public services provision. Secondly, the newly constituted Mountain Community calls for new assessment criteria to rethink both the distribution of responsibilities in the whole service provision system and in particular its role, with reference to the various administrative levels involved. In both respects, the project has provided public managers with methods

and analyses. In particular a tentative “mapping” of community needs has been set up; a framework for mapping and assessing the scale and distribution of responsibilities for selected public activities has been also provided. Overall these can be qualified as tools for agenda setting and public strategy making.

As a whole, the project aimed at providing counsellors and officers of the Mountain Community with proper surveys and assessments over the geographical distribution of community demands and a list of critical services that require reorganization. The project has produced a handbook containing policy recommendations about such issues.





Regione Lombardia, Italy (RL) - The Seriana Valley Cultural District: training and education initiatives as an engine for local development

The Seriana Valley Mountain Community is a joint association made of 38 municipalities, located within the Province of Bergamo. Its current jurisdiction covers an area of 654 square kilometres and an overall population of 140,000. Its territory thus features a rather high population density, 211 inhabitants per square kilometre. The Valley offers a vast cultural and environmental heritage – historical buildings, museums, collections of artworks, and a long lasting tradition in crafts.

The activity of the Pilot Project was focussed on a training initiative meant to reach two main objectives. The first one is an upgrade of skills of local human resources to understand regional policy mechanisms and planning approach and tools, aiming at increasing the access of local projects to regional, national and European funding. The second one is the enhancement of skills to better recognise the values of the tangible and intangible elements constituting the local heritage and to renew the offer of activities for local and external users. This also offering to Regione Lombardia feedback to enrich the territorial planning action in Alpine areas.

The training course was the sequence of previous activities for the design of the Valley Cultural District. These have enhanced the participation of local public and private actors in the debate about development projects.

The project was founded on the recognition of the importance of identity and local heritage in a territory that constitutes a unique system, although holding a variety of resources. The training course aimed at promoting local resources and potential, while overcoming unprofitable divisions. Such interventions call for the integration of innovative contents, both at the local level and at the regional level (strategic planning).

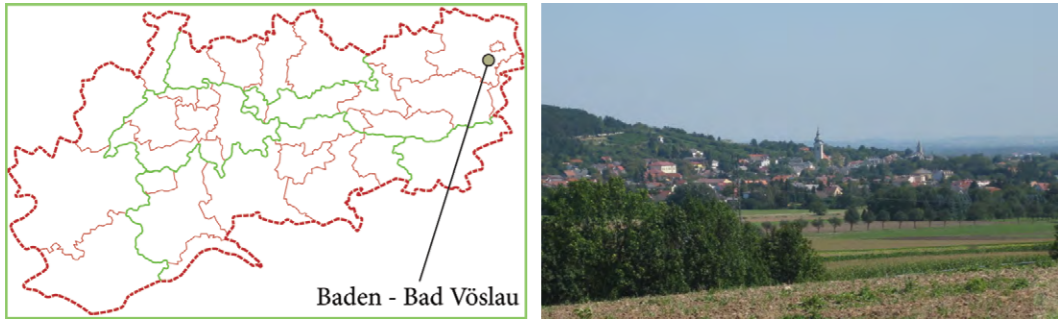
The cultural district strategic plan and the related integrated projects have been carried out with a continuous and active involvement of all the stakeholders at local and provincial level. The results came together in the project design, carried out by academics and professionals. CAPACities enriched the activities in the Valley with a training program for local professionals and officers in order to endorse the idea that knowledge can be regarded as a development resource itself. This is particularly important when rethinking strategies to enhance and valorise local environmental, cultural and socio-economic heritage: new tools

are needed to make such resources work, and the design of these tools calls for new skills. The intervention framework has therefore been arranged to promote innovative strategic planning options and a proactive behaviour in the interaction with the regional bodies.

As a result of the training activity, Regione Lombardia and its academic consultants have produced an Agenda for Seriana Valley aiming at addressing local action towards cooperation and consensus, improving the quality and effectiveness of local planning, and suggesting new planning approaches and opportunities. Moreover a selection of “bottom-up” addresses and suggestions from local subjects to regional levels has been set up as a tool for policy makers to better integrate Alpine specificities into regional territorial governance and management activities.

A second product is the methodology of the course itself: the experimentation of a maieutic approach to work out perceptions of the local community, and a more “Valley oriented” work of professionals and officers both at the regional and the local level. To enhance competitiveness two main factors have been particularly stressed in all activities: territorial integration at the valley system level and dissemination of practices regarding the exploitation of local cultural heritage as a sustainable development engine.





DI Herbert Liske, Austria (LI) - Conception of a topical strategy plan for the towns of Baden bei Wien and Bad Vöslau, paying particular attention to their location in the vicinity of a metropolitan area and the additional benefits that may result from inter-municipal cooperation.

Baden (approx. 25,300 inhabitants, 2,689 ha, 230 m a.m.s.l.) and Bad Vöslau (approx. 11,200 inhabitants, 3,876 ha, 280 m a.m.s.l.) are located in the vicinity of a dynamic development axis in the southern Vienna Basin (Wiener Becken). This area is characterized by top-ranking infrastructure (road- and rail network), an intensive development in the fields of commerce and construction, an increasing population and a considerable purchasing power.

In other words, the two towns happen to be in that very special tension zone in between the metropolitan dynamics and self-reliant development.

The Vienna Woods to the West feature top-quality natural space, and represents a major recreation area for Vienna metropolitan area.

The main goal of the Pilot Project is the development of local policies in accordance with the Lisbon Strategy, as well as of guidelines for economic activities. These will be particularly focussed on those AS-SLUCs that are close to metropolitan areas. Cooperative implementation measures (inter-municipal processes) are to generate additional benefits.

Regarding an innovative enhancement of competitiveness of urban centres in the vicinity of metropolitan areas, the role and developmental capacities of small enterprises were studied, by specifying their economic potential, their contribution to the strengthening of local activity clusters (e.g.: health, tourism services, creative enterprises), their employment rate, and their impact regarding sustainable urban development.

The project has examined the specific chances and risks of highly sensitive transition zones located in between the metropolitan areas at the foothills of the Alps and the Alpine zones proper. Analysing such a multifaceted area, it has been possible to point out a vast range of characteristics.

Measures have been deduced from the methodical employment of SWOT analysis. An integrated planning approach has been also adopted, e.g. by means of workshops and discussions with interested citizens and stakeholders.

The following tools have been developed and tested in the framework of the pilot activities on Baden and Bad Vöslau.

Analytic tools:

- general and customised SWOT indicators;
- cluster indicators focussed on “Urban functions and facilities” (supplemented by “Meta Data Cards”).

Policy tools:

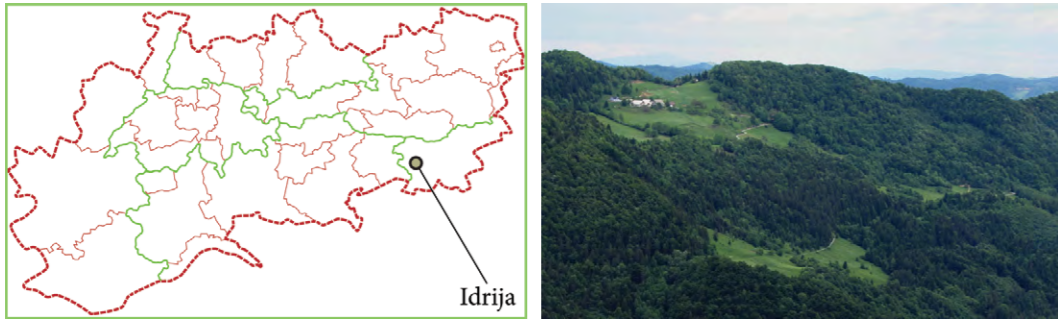
- Inter-municipal Strategic Planning. This aims at the collective development of strategies for enterprises, possibly qualifying as – non-binding – guidelines for the activity of corporate entities. These guidelines could become binding by inclusion into future local development plans.

The output of the Pilot Project Baden/Bad Vöslau is an Inter-municipal Strategic Plan, comprising:

- analysis of strengths and weaknesses of Baden and Bad Vöslau;
- analysis of regional situation;
- definition of topics, fields of action and projects;
- cooperation requirements;
- cooperation scenarios: objectives and measures.

This document recommends development strategies concerning selected topics (e.g., provision of locations for micro enterprises) on the basis of inter-municipal cooperation. Furthermore, perspectives regarding future cooperation possibilities accounting for the specific spatial frame, and competitiveness deriving from increased attractiveness are specified.





Scientific Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Anton Melik Geographical Institute, Slovenia (AMGI) - Preparing an Innovative Strategy for Sustainable Development of the Municipality of Idrija and promoting it as “Alpine Town of the Year 2011”

The Municipality of Idrija has an area of 293.7 km² and a population of 12,000, ranking among Slovenia’s medium-large municipalities. Population and activities are mainly concentrated in the Idrijca Valley, whereas the plateaus on the edge of the valleys are less suitable for settlement and business activity because of their difficult access and the roughness of the terrain. Its exceptionally favourable socioeconomic indicators rank it as the most highly developed municipality of Slovenia, mostly due to successful reorientation towards the electrical industry when mining gradually wound down in the 20th century.

The main objective has been to prepare an Innovative Strategy for Sustainable Development of the Municipality of Idrija, to define its future goals and engage all development potentials and drivers in a common development scheme. This has been closely related to the Alpine Convention protocols and thus ensures that Idrija follows a sustainable approach. It has also provided the development strategy required to apply for the Alpine Town of the Year competition. To attain this goal, various promotional materials were also prepared. Idrija eventually won the competition, and this will raise its visibility in the international community.

To rationalize the work as much as possible during the design of the strategy, we assembled six working groups, each of which was coordinated by a representative of the institute and a representative of the Municipality. To reach general agreement on the activities, we sought to include the broadest possible circle of people in designing the strategy. Therefore, regional actors have been included in the planning process in a number of ways: interviews, workshops, brainstorming sessions, leadership meetings, roundtables, questionnaires, and so on.

Within the participatory process, we directed our attention at clearly identifying the key issues that Idrija faces, and at the same time we sought possible solutions for overcoming the identified obstacles to development. The strategy is therefore an attempt to connect local players and opportunities in order to attain greater effectiveness and, by establishing clear priorities, to achieve greater goal orientation in development initiatives. The strategy

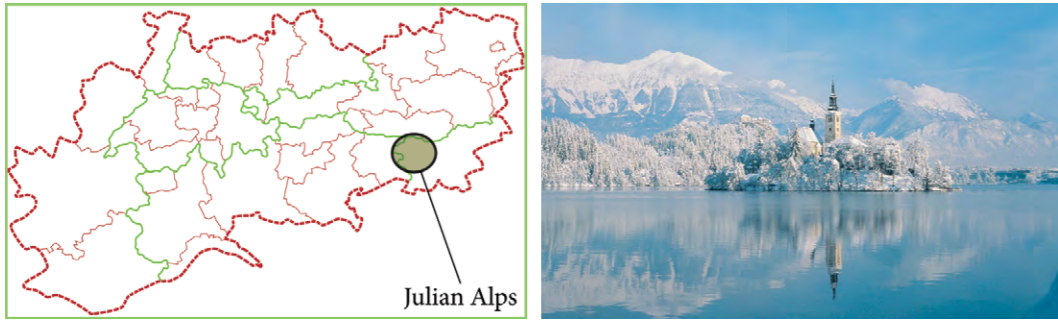
adopted by the city council will be a key development document for the municipality that will demand harmonized steps from key local players, thereby also ensuring that a mix of activities and a synergy effect are achieved. By clearly defining the goals and removing potential obstacles, the strategy will also contribute to raising interest in investment in and development of the area, especially if it succeeds in catalyzing diverse innovative solutions.

The outputs elaborated within the Pilot Area are:

- Innovative Strategy for Sustainable Regional Development of the Municipality of Idrija;
- promotional activities for Alpine Town of the Year 2011: leaflet for Idrija as Alpine Town of the Year; PowerPoint templates for Alpine Town of the Year; PowerPoint presentations on Idrija lace; an exhibition of Idrija lace in Ljubljana;
- monograph on Idrija.

We expect the main result of the Pilot Project to be the coordination of development activities in the Municipality of Idrija. In this regard, the Strategy will represent a leading document for all activities and plans, and thus the basis for the future development of Idrija. Since the aim of the Strategy is to connect local stakeholders, better coordination of activities and projects is expected in the future. The Strategy will be accompanied by a list of interlinked projects that (if applied) could have synergetic effects across the entire municipality. Promotional activities will cultivate a better image of the Idrija area, fostering tourism.





National Tourist Association, Slovenia (NTA) - Building up on the monitoring towards creating innovative tourism policies in the Julian Alps

Alpine Space in Slovenia is in the north-western part of the country. The 8 municipalities included in the Pilot Project are a part of Julian Alps and cover an area of 2,150 km². A large part of Slovenian Alpine Space is included in Triglav National Park, Natura 2000 and other protected areas. The majority of the area is facing ageing and depopulation. More than half of the area is covered up with forest. For this reason, and difficult access, limited economic activity led into development of several micro and small companies, and tourism as a main economic activity. Alongside the mountain area, some heavy industries like iron production and mercury mining flourished, but they are closing down now. Despite the relatively high educational facilities, there is a lack of well-qualified jobs which creates high commuting and depopulation.

Making a SWOT analysis for Slovenian Alpine Space, we realized there is a lot of open questions concerning the competitiveness, innovativeness and coherent sustainable development of the area. The main weaknesses are the ageing of population, remoteness of western municipalities, difficult terrain for developing most economic activities, a lack of well-qualified jobs and uncoordinated development. The largest economic sector in Slovenian Alpine Space is tourism. Further observations showed that there is no appropriate measurement, and that the tourism trade is dispersed. So our goal was to establish an appropriate monitoring system that would assist in decision-making processes and could be used by both policy makers and general public in the Pilot Area. As a tourism expert, NTA's first idea was to design a tool specialized for tourism, but throughout the process we broadened its usage with the help of our project partners, to serve as a general monitoring tool that derives from some basic assumptions for the operationalisation of sustainable regional development and the role of tourism in it. The tool would help planners get aware of potential negative changes and serve as an alarm to restrain the negative impacts and trends as soon as they start appearing, with the mission of establishing a more efficient and sustainable destination management in the Alpine Space.

Tourism competitiveness models are usually defined in four phases:

- identification, research and ranking of factors that affect the competitiveness of the tourist destination;

- selection of most appropriate indicators;
- determination of the destination's position on the market with regards to its competitors;
- merging of ascertainties into a model.

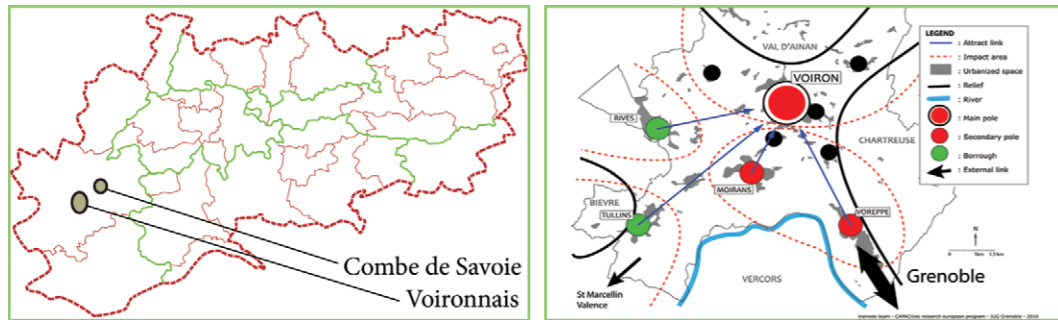
This is also the basic approach that NTA has been following in the development of this innovative e-tool. The indicators were selected initially by NTA and International Tourism Institute of Slovenia experts and at a later stage they were discussed with the stakeholders (policy makers, local authorities, local tourism organization employees, Triglav National Park management, etc.) in various meetings across Julian Alps area. The data were later collected with cooperation of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, Ministries, Municipalities and other organizations.

In order to increase competitiveness and achieve more sustainable development in the Alpine Space, NTA has built an interactive e-tool on the basis of the monitoring system. The successful implementation of policies and strategies depends on the scientifically sound tools that support decision-making by measuring and assessing the impacts of those policies. The work started with the systematic review of general models of economic macro competitiveness. Special emphasis has been placed on the classification of indicators, in particular regarding sustainability. A set of 108 potential indicators covering different aspects of sustainability and competitiveness was created, classified into groups and put into discussion. Later, the list of indicators was shortened and the groups of indicators have been rearranged. The final tool is the Competitiveness Monitor, which follows the structure commonly suggested by mainstream sustainability and competitiveness models.

Throughout the project, NTA conducted several studies and produced a general SWOT analysis for the Alpine Space, a cluster analysis, and several discussions on sustainable tourism and competitiveness of the Alpine Space. The main output, relevant at the transnational scale, is CAPACities Alpine Competitiveness Monitor – a Benchmarking e-Tool for Attractive, Innovative and Sustainable Alpine Communities. It shows a balanced view of competitiveness in Alpine Space and consists of 20 indicators, which project partners consider as important and for which the data were expected to be available in the majority of countries. As a whole, CAPACities Alpine Competitiveness Monitor can be considered as an innovative tool that is: theoretically sound; practically applicable; simple; efficient; useful; able to represent the common vision of competitiveness in Alpine Space by the CAPACities project partnership.

This makes a valuable contribution to the success of CAPACities project and the implementation of Lisbon Strategy and EU Sustainable Development Strategy. Thus it should also represent a shift from semantics to practicalities in terms of sustainable development of the Alpine Space.





Urban Planning Institute of Grenoble, France (IUG) - Promoting leading roles for new and existing secondary centres in the making of the territorial plans for Combe de Savoie and Voironnais.

The *communauté de communes* of Montmélian (Savoie) groups fifteen municipalities and a population of 14,000. The chief town, Montmélian, is about 50 km from Grenoble and 15 from Chambéry. Combe de Savoie is a highly industrialised area specialized in the production of machinery. With 36,7% of the total of workplaces in 2004, the importance of industry, although decreasing, is high. The demographic dynamism of the region is now due to the immigration of people from Chambéry or Grenoble, where they keep their jobs. The importance of the chief town is balanced by other urban centres.

Pays Voironnais (Isère) is a *communauté d'agglomération*, which groups thirty-four municipalities. This was an industrial region and the relative stability of the industrial workplaces can be explained by the dynamism of a few medium enterprises specialized in the manufacture of plastics and electric and electronic components. The production of skis is also noteworthy. The services represent the most important activity sector and are dominated by health, social and educational activities. The demographic dynamism depends from the arrival of families (with children under 15) from Grenoble and its suburbs. Voiron contains less than a quarter of the total population. Its influence is balanced by other small towns, in a polycentric territorial organisation.

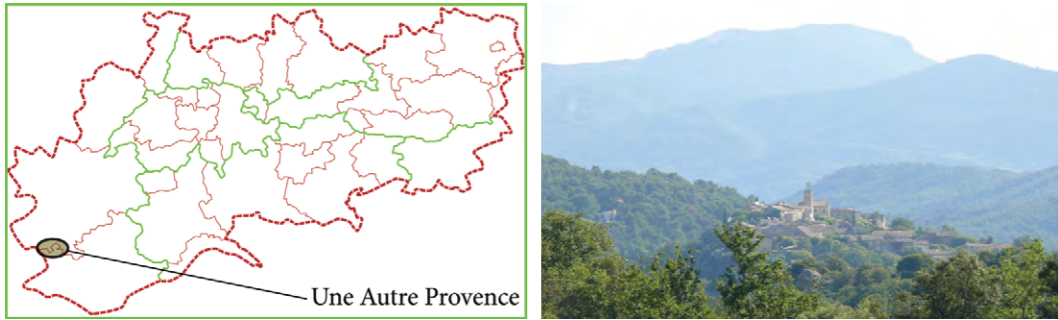
Pays Voironnais has asked a consortium of planners to conduct an investigation on centrality in its territory. Its conclusions are that two main objectives should be established: enhance the position of Voiron, that is too weak at present; search for complementarities between small towns and new poles inside a network of specialized centralities. In the context of CAPACities, other parts of Voironnais have been included in the analysis, and two workshops with students of the Institut d'Urbanisme de Grenoble have been held. Groups of four students have examined the conclusions of the research and proposed new centrality scenarios for Voironnais. The output of the students' work has been presented and discussed with professionals, mayors and private stakeholders of Pays Voironnais. The same pattern has been followed working on the canton of Montmélian.

The main objective of the project is to improve the polycentric territorial organisation by developing scenarios of transformation in these two areas. This new model integrates both

existing small towns and emerging poles around mobility plate-forms. The diversification of commercial malls, and the creation of new developments near railway or tramway stations (in a perspective close to New Urbanism's Transit-Oriented Developments) could be valid alternatives to the solutions envisaged by functionalist town planning. The innovative part of the project lies in putting together academic activities (students' workshops) and operative issues. The know-how of the Institut d'Urbanisme de Grenoble, in holding such workshops, merges with the local authorities' interest in the point of view of students, who are not directly involved in operative process of planning.

The tool used is the production of scenarios about the spatial organisation of the two regions. The scenarios method can be thought as an alternative to prevision. Building images of the future of a territory can be a performing tool to introduce a public debate. The scenario method will be integrated in guidelines about territorial planning at the intermediate (inter-municipal) level in Alpine valleys.





Adviser in Architecture, Urban Planning and Environment of Vaucluse, France (CAUE84) - Plans for facilities and trading estates in Pays Une Autre Provence.

Pays Une Autre Provence is a wide area (2,171 km²) which gathers 122,500 inhabitants in 120 municipalities, from the Rhône valley, to the West, to the Alps, to the East. The Rhône valley, which is very industrialized and urbanized, is a major European communication corridor (motorway, high speed railway...). On the contrary, the mountain area is very depopulated (even less than 10 inhabitants/km²), because of the decline of agriculture in the last 150 years. Competitiveness and attractiveness must be improved, territorial cohesion between valley and mountain areas must be pursued.

The *Pays* was created in 2005, as a “target area”, within the framework of the French Law no. 99-533 of June 25th, 1999 on Territorial planning and Sustainable development. So, planning policies are conceived on a coherent spatial entity, where people live and work.

The major cultural, leisure and sport facilities, mainly located in the urban centres, are frequented by the population of a wide area. Yet some facilities are located in very small mountain towns with particularly scarce budgets, while such facilities are used by a very large public. The inter-municipal Plan for cultural, leisure and sport facilities has been set up to coordinate projects and public investment, in order to assure cohesion between urban centres and small municipalities. The Plan for facilities is set up after survey and dialogue with municipalities and inter-municipal associations, by CAUE of Drôme and CAUE of Vaucluse (CAUE84). A process of consultation and dialogue with councillors (questionnaires, meetings...) was set up for designing the Plan.

The long distance from the urban centres is one of the main causes of the almost absolute use of private cars for transportation. The promotion of “environment friendly” transportation requires the development of public transport. The Plan for transport hubs has been developed by CAUE84, following the Plan for mobility set up in 2007 by ITER (private consultant), in cooperation with the Department of Vaucluse and the municipalities of Vaison-la-Romaine and Valréas. The Plan prescribes the implementation of transports hubs in seven small towns.

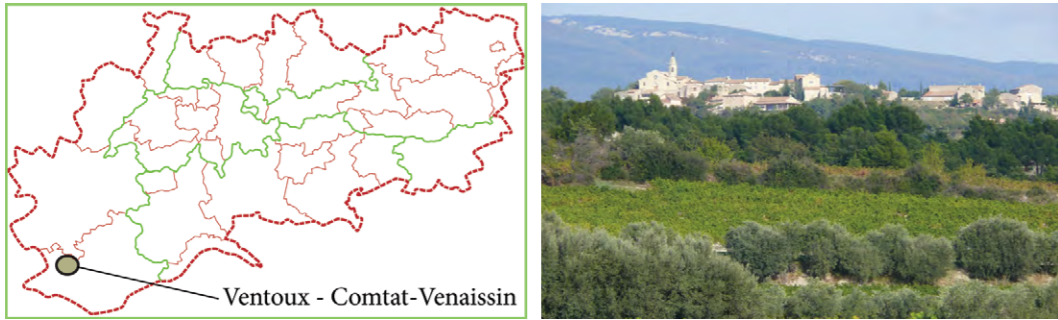
The Plan for trading estates defines some places with specific clusters, with the aim to promote an economic renewal of the rural and mountain area. The Plan gives prospects

to the traditional activities issued from agriculture, by research and development, in order to create value added and employment. The Plan is developed by CAUE84 and ID International (consultant), using data bases, enquiries and interviews, in cooperation with local authorities, agencies in charge of economic development and enterprises. An inventory of economic resources including a qualitative analysis of the companies (value added of existing productions or services, use of innovative technologies, existence of networks...) has been used to draw the Plan. Thus, the territory planning considers the emergence of clusters based on specific fields of innovative activities, issued from local traditions.

Outputs:

- cultural, leisure and sport facilities: Plan (issued July 2009) including 9 projects exercising an influence on the whole Une Autre Provence, and 15 inter-municipal projects. They will contribute to improve the local quality of life. 6 projects are or will be set up in the short term;
- transport services: Plan (issued November 2010) including an overall scheme of public transport, and two new hubs in Vaison-la-Romaine and Valréas. It will contribute to improve accessibility and mobility;
- business: Plan (issued November 2010) including a survey of activities in different economic sectors. The development of new activities – linked with the exploitation of vegetable resources (cosmetics, distillation, fragrances and flavours industries) and located in designated estates – will contribute to improve attractiveness and competitiveness of the area. Pays Une Autre Provence and CAUE84 have also organised a workshop of the “Rural Excellence Cluster” on “Plant products valorisation and conversion”.





Adviser in Architecture, Urban Planning and Environment of Vaucluse, France (CAUE84) - Plan for tourist facilities and strategies for sustainable tourism in the Ventoux – Comtat-Venaissin Community

The Ventoux – Comtat-Venaissin Community (CoVe) is an inter-municipal body which includes 25 municipalities on 527 km². This territory can be subdivided in two parts: the Comtat Plain, to the South, and the massif area (Dentelles de Montmirail, mount Ventoux, Vaucluse massif), to the North-East, comprising 8 municipalities. Three municipalities are located in a Rural Revitalization Zone, as defined by the Governmental Direction for Territory Planning (DATAR). The total population is around 66,000; there is an imbalance between plain and massif areas. The first objective of CoVe is the improvement of territorial cohesion between plain and massif.

CoVe is an intermunicipal Community created in 2002 within the framework of Law 99-586 of July 12th, 1999 on Reinforcement and Simplification of the intermunicipal cooperation. CoVe adopted an exclusive jurisdiction on “Heritage and Tourism promotion”. Despite the important expansion of tourism, this activity is not yet very organized: there are local (municipal) tourist offices not connected with territorial network; the cultural and natural resources are dispersed; there is no link between tourism and local society, economy, and products.

The main objectives of the Plan for tourist facilities are to improve knowledge on culture, environment and resources of the territory, and to show to tourists, residents and students the diversity and wealth of the local products, with the aim to increase the value added of tourism activity. The main objectives of the strategy for sustainable tourism are to develop tourist policies within the framework of the local Agenda 21, and to set up innovative means of tourist management.

The location of the tourist facilities has been defined, considering the road network, and the movement of tourists to the main attractions of the region. The project, designed by CP&O (private consultant) and CAUE84, is based on sustainability: shared vision, flexibility, green buildings.

The strategy for sustainable tourism proposed by Cité de la Culture et du Tourisme Durable (CCTD) is based on environment protection, social cohesion and economic development. The main stakeholders involved are CCTD, the Departmental Tourist Committee (CDT),

municipalities and tourist offices.

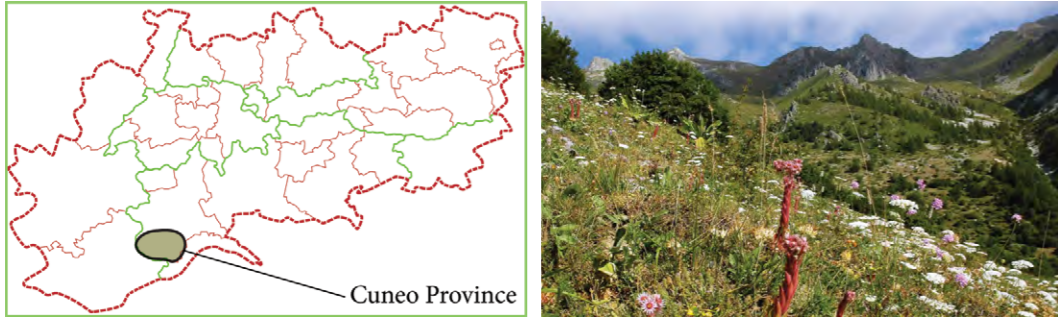
Innovative tools:

- the Departmental Plan for sustainable development of Vaucluse: Vaucluse accommodates 4 million tourists per year: the tourism sector represents 15% of the jobs. The Plan, adopted in 2007, is notably based on a better involvement of the local population, a diversification of accommodation, reducing the role of secondary housing, and an economy founded on natural and cultural heritage;
- strategies for sustainable tourism: The CoVe policy for tourism development, adopted in 2007, is based on respect for environment, heritage, local population and customers. The main actions undertaken are: network of 11 tourist offices, communication and promotion of the district, development of cycle touring and project of tourist facilities. Following experience of CCTD, prospects are defined for a measurement system of tourist policies and impacts, and for a benchmarking system to position the CoVe territory;
- the label “Cities and Territories of Art and History”: The Ministry of Culture created the label for those local authorities with strong policies for heritage valorisation. Since 2002, CoVe and the local network of tourist offices have been working to obtain such label.

Outputs:

- three reports by CAUE84: “Urban planning regulation” (September 2009): Projects feasibility, according to the building and risks protection regulations; “Projects for surroundings” (February 2010): Recommendations for a good integration of tourist host facilities to their urban context; “Integration context analysis” (March 2010): Specific characteristics of the different areas, natural and cultural resources, typical agricultural productions, traditional crafts, local events;
- an organizational study by CP&O, in coherence with the above reports;
- a feasibility study to confirm or invalidate the establishment of a business incubator at the mount Ventoux. According to the results of such feasibility study, CP&O will define the requirements for the buildings of the old plasterworks; lastly, the winner of a competition will design the refurbishment project, according to an environmental quality standard;
- a workshop on sustainable tourism, organized by CoVe, CAUE84 and CCTD.





Local Development Agency Langhe Monferrato Roero, Italy (LAMORO) - Implementation of women's competitiveness in Cuneo Province.

Cuneo is the largest province of Piedmont and the third largest Italian province. The area consists of a central plain, more appropriately a tableland ranging from 300 to 700 meters above sea level, snuggling up against the Alpine chain to the West and the Langhe and Roero hills to the East, opening out northwards to the Po valley. Much part of the province of Cuneo is peripheral, but perhaps for this reason it has managed to preserve its integrity. Urban and industrial growth has somehow respected environmental and agricultural needs.

The Pilot Project pursued the following goals:

- increasing the value of women's know-how in alpine areas;
- creating a network between women's tourism, handicrafts, agricultural, and cultural enterprises in order to cooperate and to realize mutual synergies on the market;
- individuating a specific niche market, also referring to what women's businesses offer (lifestyle models, choices, cultural contents, handicraft products, food, services, or the integration of all this).

The following actions were carried out:

- research to recognise the specific features of the area;
- creation of a network between public and private entities interested in the development of a common project;
- organisation of meetings for information and dialogue;
- identification of traditional local productions to be recovered and promoted;
- launching a public promotion of a new way to be an entrepreneur.

The main goal of the Pilot Project was to identify two typologies of stakeholders: subjects able to facilitate the process – such as women who have chosen to live in the mountains for ecological and culturally alternative reasons –, and women entrepreneurs, who are often young and newly (re)settled in mountain territories.

Our approach was to give birth to a process that was managed and shared by the community, in accord with real needs and knowledge: mountain women speaking to other mountain women, about common problems, things to be changed or renewed, as well as new relationships and links.

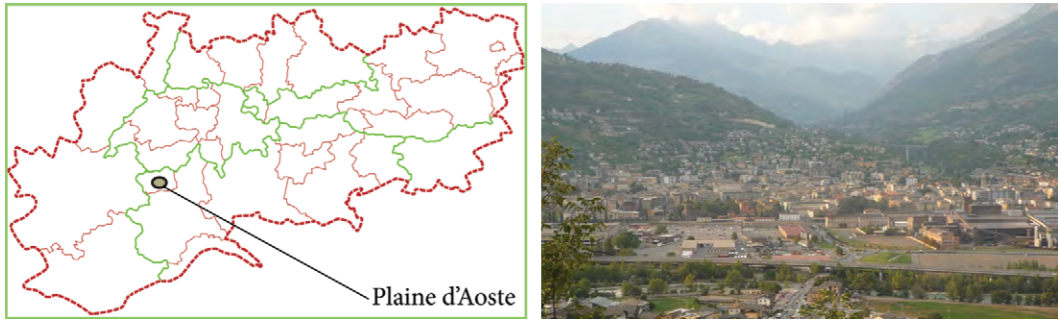
Information meetings, organised in due course, were aimed at involving women at whom actions are targeted. Since the beginning of last century, Alpine population, and women in particular, have been considered just as cows to milk votes from – during national political campaigns, women never lose the chance to show their indifference. This behaviour cause some constrains to women's mountain activities.

The overall goal of the Pilot Project was to improve the feminine businesses in the mountain areas of the province of Cuneo, strengthening their role and making them more sustainable in the medium and long term.

The main results have been:

- the creation of new kinds of self-employment, both subsidiary and cooperative, in order to realize synergies with local stakeholders, public authorities, crafts associations, and the market;
- the planning of a feminine work incubator, allowing space for both feminine creativity and children care;
- the creation, or more exactly the rediscovery, of an Alpine system built on small markets and extremely specialized offers, both highly sustainable and culturally valuable.





Regione Autonoma Valle d'Aosta, Italy (RAVDA) - Experiencing a participative approach to Regional Planning in Aoste Plain.

The Pilot Area, *Plaine d'Aoste*, is a part of the central valley of the region. Its surface is 514 km² at an altitude of around 500 metres a.m.s.l. A river, a national road, a motorway, and a railway run through this narrow alluvial plain. Its morphology is typical of an Alpine valley. The Pilot Area contains the regional capital Aosta and 15 more municipalities. The population of the *Plaine* rose to 68,224 in 2008. In Aoste Plain live more than 54% of the regional population (125,979 inhabitants). During the last ten years, the population has increased by 55%, despite a decrease of the capital's own one (-7%). During the same period, the regional population has increased by 12%.

Inter-municipal approach

The main innovative objective of the project is to strengthen a bottom-up planning approach, not top-down as Valle d'Aosta Region mainstream. Another innovation with regard to the local context is an inter-municipal approach, that adopts a general vision of the future development.

The project aims particularly at:

- identifying assets and weaknesses;
- highlighting the common problems;
- setting up a network of local resources;
- identifying general development guidelines on the subjects selected by the mayors;
- co-ordinating actions and projects;
- identifying the main development directions which could possibly become the bases for the future revision of *Piano Territoriale Paesistico Regionale* (Regional Landscape Plan);
- involving, where possible, local stakeholders in the planning process;
- providing bilingual guidance about territorial planning.

Collaborative planning

The main innovation of the project is to activate a participatory process, which involves not only mayors but also economic actors and non-governmental organisations (associations, cultural groups...), in order to build shared objectives. Bilingual guidance has been a very

useful tool to collect information about the planning process, which could be disseminated in other areas of the region. Benchmarking seminaries have been organized to compare the *Plaine d'Aoste* experience with best practices selected from other Italian regions or foreign countries.

The main tools used are:

- active participation of all stakeholders involved in the local development process by means of interactive workshops,
- organisation of an on-site survey in order to identify opportunities and threats,
- comparison with external best practices, in a benchmarking approach,
- provision of a guidance service about territorial planning addressed to local actors and citizens,
- production of a documentary to inform the population about the importance of participation in territorial planning matters.

The work is performed by RAVDA (Office for Territory and Environment) involving the sixteen municipalities composing the *Conseil de la Plaine*. After the first work phase, that involved the mayors only, workshops have been organized in order to engage also the main public and private stakeholders. Such activities have been performed in autumn 2010.

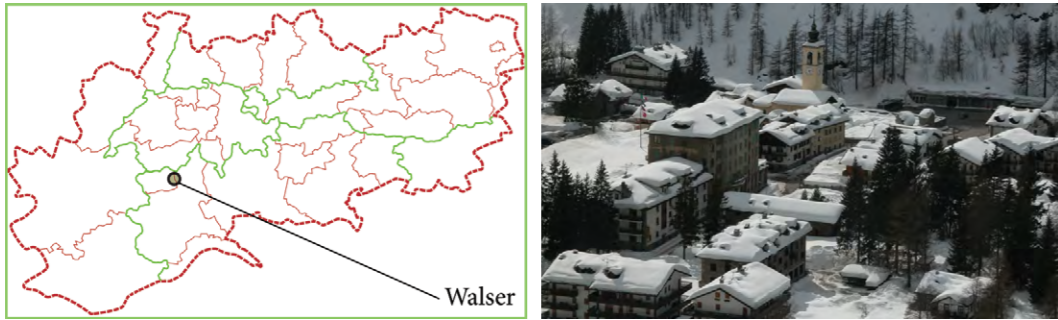
Main immediate results:

- issues to deal with during the meeting on “best practices”;
- draft of a territory development project (common vision);
- identifying territorial planning guidelines that will be the base for updating the *Piano Territoriale Paesistico Regionale*.

The Pilot Project aims also at leading to permanent transformations:

- making dialogue between public and private stakeholders become a habit in the perspective of a more balanced territory management. A video to be broadcast on TV will reinforce this new culture;
- in the long term, promoting the accomplishment of those projects that were agreed as priority.





Regione Autonoma Valle d'Aosta, Italy (RAVDA) - Promoting new roles for young and aged people to draw a tourism plan and encourage permanence in Walser Mountain Community.

Geographical position: Pennine Alps (Monte Rosa) – Lys Valley

Area: 200 km²

Population: 2,007 (ISTAT 2009)

4 municipalities: Issime, Gaby, Gressoney-Saint-Jean, Gressoney-La-Trinité

1 mountain community: Walser - Alta Valle del Lys

Monte Rosa ski runs

The development of a Tourism Plan will support the characterization, differentiation, and completion of the tourist trade, improving competitiveness, market potential and adaptability in close connection with the variation of the market demand. In addition, this Plan will support the strengthening and consolidation of indirect activities related to it, such as handicrafts and general services, which will benefit the implementation of the proposed actions.

The Plan will promote a better involvement of different components of the population, enhancing social and employment perspectives, and increasing hospitality skills.

An Action Plan for the creation of new perspectives for young and senior citizens will contribute to establish new occupational and social opportunities for young people, and improve the social role in the community of the elderly.

Furthermore, the implementation of the Plan will counter the present negative demo-socio-economic trends.

The methodology used to ensure stakeholder participation requires a complete and serious awareness of both the economic and demographic situation of the local and general context (“shock method”). This approach was born from the understanding that the positive phase of the Western economies characterizing the second half of the 20th century is finishing, and now we need to find a new equilibrium. This research requires a new and more realistic way to see and face the actual situation.

The tools used for the implementation of the approach were interviews with various stakeholders, including some craftsmen. The awareness of the economic and demographic

state was raised through the discussion about the demographic and economic findings obtained in the pilot study, as well as the simple and quick presentation of good practices in tourism, handicrafts, and inter-generational activity. The meetings led to workshops intended to outline the fundamental elements of further activities.

These meetings will continue beyond the conclusion of the experimental work of CAPACities, to maintain the current state of public knowledge and promote new forms of active participation (“direct democracy”).

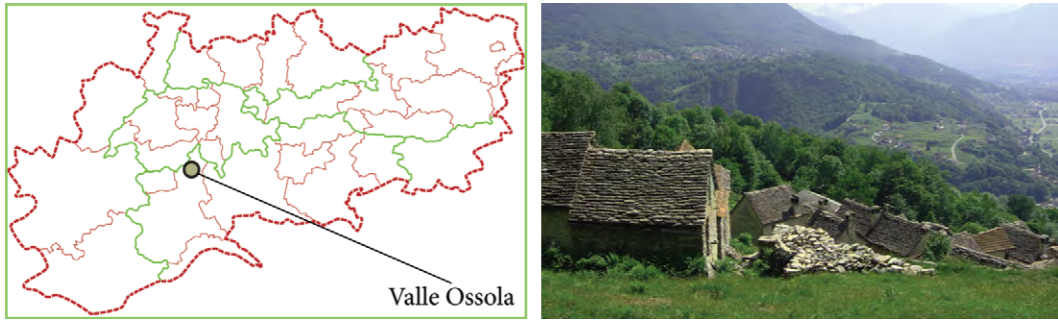
Effects:

- development of a model for tourism planning characterized by large participation and agreement;
- large participation of the population in the regional economic choices;
- improvement of the competitiveness of hospitality through specialization;
- amelioration of demographic trends;
- increase of employment opportunities, particularly for young people;
- improvement of the social role of the elderly;
- increase of social cohesion;
- growth of cultural relations and consequently of the educational level in the area.

Specific products:

- a Walser culture guide: an innovative document describing local identity;
- a market study: an analysis of local demography and economy with special attention to handicrafts (both traditional and non-local). The effects of demographic changes on the handicraft sector and the market trends of traditional products were jointly analyzed. This analysis allowed drawing a plan of action to improve the competitiveness of crafts.





Regione Piemonte, Italy (RP) - Definition of a shared strategy for contrasting mountainside settlements depopulation in Ossola Valley.

Ossola Pilot Project area contains 11 municipalities (Anzola d'Ossola, Beura Cardezza, Bognanco, Domodossola, Masera, Mergozzo, Ornavasso, Pallanzeno, Premosello Chiovena, Trontano, and Vogogna). Total population is 34,224 (2008), mostly in the valley floor. The largest town is Domodossola (18,452 inhabitants), which plays a key role in a wider area. The remainder municipalities have a population smaller than 5,000. Domodossola is at the crossing point of a five-valley system, and is on the TEN corridor no. 24 connecting Genova to Rotterdam via the Simplon tunnel.

The main goal of the Pilot Project was to identify measures for contrasting depopulation of mountainside villages.

Actions carried out included:

- an in-depth analysis of the available stock of local resources, both tangible and intangible;
- the analysis of ongoing projects, plans and programmes, carried out by public and private entities;
- the activation of a participatory process to identify possible strategies to promote living in mountainside villages, and support rehabilitation projects;
- the assessment of the production potential of different renewable energy sources (wood, sun, water, wind), with a specific focus on mountainside settlements;
- the analysis of traditional building technologies and of possible means for increasing their energy efficiency;
- a case-study analysis on the possible rehabilitation of an almost abandoned village in the municipality of Masera.

The methodological approach is characterised by three key elements:

- cross-sectorality: the problem has been read from different points of view (accessibility, services supply, possible economic activities, feasibility of architectural interventions, etc.);
- inclusivity, i.e. the active involvement of a wide range of local stakeholders (local government officers, representatives of the building sector, research centres, citizens associations, etc.);
- informality, that is a non-structured and open decision-making process.

In the analytical and problem-setting phase a special attention has been devoted to the recognition of ongoing dynamics, and current policies issued by the main local bodies. This has been done using both quantitative data (on demography, morphology, economy, etc.) and qualitative data, *i.e.* the point of view of local stakeholders on four issues:

- the main critical points when designing policies for contrasting depopulation of mountainside villages,
- the main obstacles for such policies (in terms of accessibility, building costs, etc.),
- the main local resources that can enhance attractiveness of such settlements, and how to activate those resources.

In the implementation phase the tools used have followed this twofold strategy, thus combining data elaboration (for example on the potential energy production from renewable resources, or on the measures to reduce energy consumption of buildings) with the building of a common development strategy among local stakeholders through the use of a wide range of tools (workshops, focus groups, inter-institutional coordination meetings, etc.).

The main outputs of the Pilot Project are:

- a policy tool, that contains policy addresses, suggested development strategies and priorities for contrasting depopulation of mountainside villages;
- a document containing guidelines for the revitalisation of mountainside villages, with suggestions/addresses on architectural, social, and economic issues related to the theme;
- a study in which the policies suggested in the guidelines are tested in a specific case study (a semi-abandoned village in the municipality of Masera).





Regione Piemonte, Italy (RP) - Definition of a sustainable and shared development strategy for the valorisation of local resources in Varaita Valley.

Varaita is a 60 km long valley at the French border. It contains 14 municipalities (Bellino, Brossasco, Casteldelfino, Costigliole Saluzzo, Frassinò, Isasca, Melle, Piasco, Pontechianale, Rossana, Sampeyre, Valmala, Venasca, and Verzuolo). A Provincial road runs through the valley and connects it to the French Vallée du Guil through the 2,748 m high Colle dell'Agnello. Total population is 18,617 (2007), mostly in its lower part. Albeit not part of the valley, Saluzzo (16,669 inhabitants) delivers to it most urban functions (AS-SLUC) and constitutes the link between the valley and the rest of Piemonte.

The main goal of the Pilot Project was to define a shared and sustainable development strategy, based on an efficient use of locally available resources (with a specific focus on energy production and on the wood sector).

Actions included:

- an in-depth analysis of the available stock of local resources, both tangible and intangible;
- the analysis of ongoing projects, plans and programmes, carried out by public and private entities, with a specific focus on the wood sector;
- the activation of a participatory process to identify possible strategies to ensure a sound exploitation of locally available resources;
- the assessment of the production potential of different renewable local energy sources (wood, sun, water, wind);
- an analysis on forest husbandry and the use of wood to produce both furniture and energy; this includes the case-study of retrofitting a public building in Sampeyre.

The approach that guided the Pilot Project in Varaita Valley is that the definition of a development policy for an AS-SLUC should be based on two crucial assumptions:

- an adequate use of local resources might guarantee that development strategies will have lasting and positive effects on the Valley. This implies two things: that an in-depth analysis of the context dynamics should inform any policy design process, and that these processes should always be locally-centred rather than responding to abstract models;
- the activation of local know-how through participatory processes is essential to ensure the efficacy of policies.

The main outputs of the Pilot Project are:

- the definition of a shared strategic document on local development;
- the definition of guidelines for the use of renewable resources in energy production and for reducing energy consumption in Alpine contexts;
- the testing of the above-mentioned guidelines in the Pilot Project area (particularly on a public building in Sampeyre).

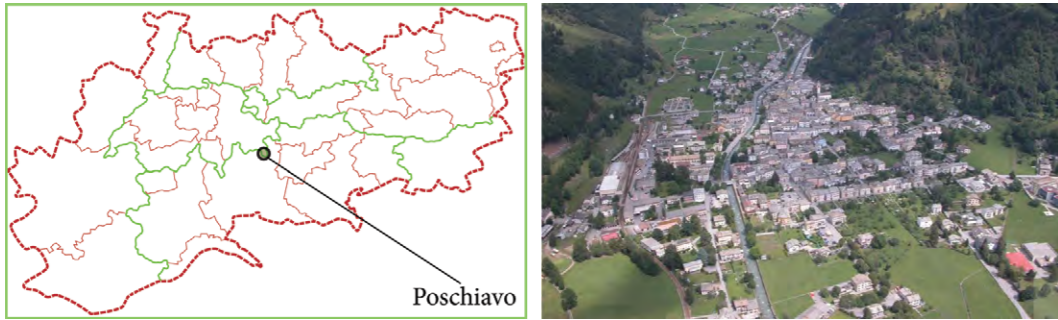
Possible medium-long-term effects of the Pilot Project might include:

- strengthening of informal governance networks (mainly those formed by private stakeholders and municipalities);
- initiatives for the exploitation of local resources (through agreements between private stakeholders and public authorities, participation to calls, etc.);
- definition of one or more forest management plans at a municipal scale.

From the communication point of view, Project outputs include:

- a regional publication on general project results;
- a local publication describing the operation in the Valley;
- two issues of a newsletter.





Graubünden Canton (GR), Switzerland - Upgrading the attractiveness and the competitiveness of the location of Poschiavo

Poschiavo is one of the two municipalities in the valley of Poschiavo (Valposchiavo), which is situated in the south-east of the Graubünden Canton close to the Italian border. Poschiavo lays at about 1,000 m a.m.s.l. Nature, landscape and climate bring a high quality of life.

The valley has a population of 4,500, about 800 of whom in the “Borgo”, the historical core of Poschiavo. The population is slightly decreasing and according to the Canton it’s likely that decrease will persist. The region is confronted with problems of brain drain and population ageing, such that there is a lack of highly qualified manpower.

Today the historical buildings in the urban core are well preserved and densely used. But there is a threat that the village core be abandoned and the empty houses no longer maintained. This could happen because of high rents and maintenance costs.

Beneficial regulatory and economic conditions are to be created in order to valorise those buildings that possess an historical value. Moreover, an overall strategy for the urban core should be developed. Through the integration in the CAPACities project, the Municipality wants to find a solution to the problem and develop a new vision for Poschiavo.

The first step was an assessment of the current situation through a SWOT analysis in a workshop with local experts. In a one-day-workshop the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats – regarding “settlement and geographical issues”, “economic issues”, “social issues”, “environmental issues” and “institutional issues” – were discussed. This overall view allowed identifying the key future challenges. The focus on the “Borgo” is of special interest for the Pilot Project.

The analysis of the demographic situation in the urban core of Poschiavo has showed how this part of the settlement is used; the approximate number of inhabitants, companies, jobs, and the condition of buildings. This survey has made it possible to localise potentials and problems geographically in the Borgo and to get characteristic indicators such as living space per inhabitant. The results of this survey and the SWOT analysis have been the basis for the study briefs. These studies have formed the most important part of the Pilot Project. According to the briefs, appointed architects have dealt with different issues in the urban space and building structure of the Borgo. The studies provide with good examples for later implementation. In the best case, the projects will be realised, to become so-called

“Lighthouse projects”.

It’s very likely that the legal preconditions are set at the municipal level (*Nutzungsplanung* = land use plan and building regulations), so that the study ideas can be implemented. These preconditions include the adjustment of zoning (*Bauzonenausscheidung*) and design prescriptions.

The most important stakeholders involved in the project are local authorities (Municipality of Poschiavo and Region Valposchiavo), the cantonal administration (Ufficio per lo sviluppo del territorio) and private operators (STW AG and others). These stakeholders set the framework for the architects work. The contact between stakeholders and architects was guaranteed through regular meetings (the discussion platform) during which the architects showed their results and the stakeholders gave feedbacks.

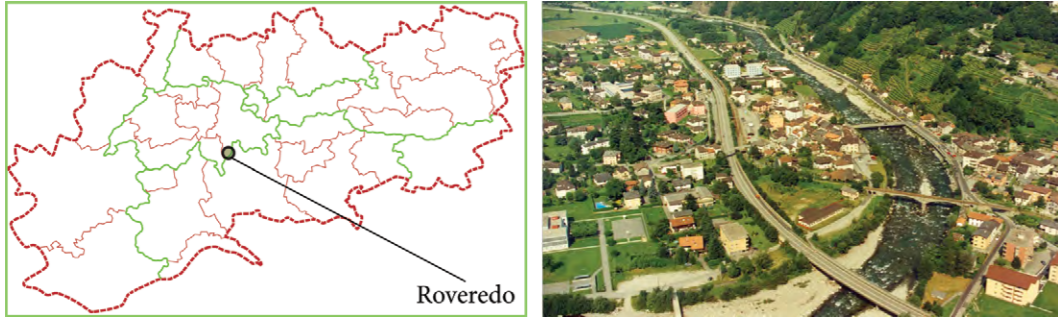
The upgrading of the attractiveness and the competitiveness of the historical centre of Poschiavo is based on the knowledge and the perspective of local actors and stakeholders. On one hand, they set the basic conditions and the requirements to the architects and their projects. On the other hand they accompany the individual projects when the work of the architects ends. It will depend from a large part of them, if and how the ideas can be realised.

The four architects have been selected because of their technical know-how and international reputation. A discussion platform has been created to guarantee communication and exchange between the architects: this exchange led to a boosting atmosphere. The architects have therefore not been competitive with each other but worked together because of a common interest in the problems and challenges in the pilot region. They were proposed different topics and sites to focus on and have been let free in choosing which issue(s) to address. So, architectural designs encompassed a wide spectrum of scales from the single room to the overall urban pattern.

The main outputs have been: short reports about the main steps, methods and results; articles in architectural journals: as the projects developed by the architects are published, dissemination can lead to similar projects in other Alpine towns; publication on the Internet is used to reach the general public, so that the ideas can be accessible to all interested parties.

One of the most important outputs is the paper “Guidelines for Local and Territorial Planners”. It contains ideas and principles for what could or should be done in a situation similar to the one in Poschiavo.





Graubünden Canton (GR), Switzerland - Upgrading the attractiveness and the competitiveness of the location of Roveredo–Mesolcina

Roveredo and the neighbouring municipalities of San Vittore, Grono, Leggia, Cama, and Verdabbio (Bassa Mesolcina) are located in the south-west of the Graubünden Canton at the border to the Canton Ticino and Italy. The area comprises 7,564 ha, and the altitude varies from 279 m a.m.s.l. of San Vittore to 2,720 m a.m.s.l. of Pizzo di Claro. The majority of the population lives at the bottom of the valley. The population of Bassa Mesolcina has increased by 15% between 1985 and 2008. In the same period the number of jobs increased by only 3%. Bassa Mesolcina municipalities are essentially “dormitory towns”.

For employment, Roveredo depends from the surrounding towns. Particularly, the dependence from the agglomeration of Bellinzona and other regions of the Canton Ticino is very important: in the year 2000, there were 74 incoming commuters and 382 outgoing.

In comparison with the neighbouring municipalities, Roveredo seems a financially poor municipality. With Sfr. 1.816, the cantonal tax revenue per capita of Roveredo is much lower than that of the other municipalities (Grono Sfr. 2,701, Cama 2,694, San Vittore 2,470). Only the small municipalities of Leggia (Sfr. 1,432) and Verdabbio (Sfr. 1,208) give less tax revenue.

The range of economic roles is quite diverse, San Vittore being characterised by industry, Grono by crafts and services, Roveredo by services and residence and Cama, Leggia, and Verdabbio by residence.

The project was initiated by the Graubünden Canton in cooperation with the Municipality of Roveredo and Region Mesolcina. Urban rebuilding will offer a great development opportunity after the bypass road of Roveredo is built. The new tunnel will be inaugurated in 2016. After this the demolition of the present road will start.

The private operator Planidea SA of Canobbio is in charge of the coordination and the management of the project as mandated by Canton, Municipality and Region. The Pilot Project has first of all analysed the current economic and social situation. Then different development strategies have been evaluated, to be subsequently discussed in a workshop of experts. The involvement of local population and entrepreneurs has been assured by surveys, which served to refine the development strategy. The realization of the strategy has been entrusted to an agency for territorial promotion.

The most important stakeholders involved in the project are local authorities (Municipality of Roveredo and Region Mesolcina), the cantonal administration (Ufficio per lo sviluppo del territorio) and private operators (Planidea SA, GISPLAN AG and others if needed).

The rebuilding of the town of Roveredo leads to the definition of a new development strategy for the revitalization of the region, which involved also private economic partners and the whole population. The goals of the development strategy are to provide quality homes and reinforce the services.

The programme for upgrading the attractiveness and the competitiveness of Roveredo–Mesolcina has been based on the current regional structure. No one better than local population and entrepreneurs know the problems and can propose how to increase the attractiveness of the place. We have therefore worked out a development strategy considering the experiences of other urban areas, in particular of German-speaking Switzerland (Zurich, Bern, and Basel).

Outputs:

- project report;
- publications in trade journals;
- publication on the Internet;
- guidelines for Local and Territorial Planners.



4.4 Different territorial contexts

The Pilot Areas: a large diversity of situations

CAPACities partners chose to develop the Pilot Projects in different territorial contexts. Within the framework of the CAPACities Operational tools, a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) has been set up by the partners on each Pilot Area. A common method, set up by the Anton Melik Geographical Institute was adopted; this is based on geographical, economic, social, environmental, and institutional issues. These SWOT analyses highlighted some weaknesses and threats which led to define actions to relieve problematic states and reverse negative trends; while actions were designed to strengthen opportunities.

Seriana Valley and other valleys, like those of Cuneo Province, Ossola, and Varaita Valley (Italy), which suffer from population decrease, high rate of aged people, or unemployment, due to agricultural or industrial decline, need economic, social and cultural renewal policies. Some territories, like Pays Une Autre Provence (France), Verbano and Walser Valleys (Italy), Julian Alps (Slovenia), as well as some AS-SLUCs, like Poschiavo (Switzerland), possess attractive natural, human and cultural resources, which are interesting opportunities for local development policies.

Other territories, like Ventoux–Comtat-Venaissin Community (France) and some medium altitude AS-SLUCs, like Idrija (Slovenia), have a good economic position, based on agricultural or industrial traditions, but present some threats which need to plan policies of diversification.

Finally, there are some territories, as Combe de Savoie, Voironnais (France), Aoste Plain and Chiavenna Valley (Italy), and some AS-SLUCs, like Baden bei Wien, Bad Vöslau (Austria), and Roveredo–Mesolcina (Switzerland), which are developed and urbanized, or can become urbanized in the short term, due to their location near big towns or main roads. As a priority, they need territory protection and urban planning policies.

Territorial dynamics issued from significant clusters

Some Pilot Areas were linked with significant clusters, as presented by the following examples:

- building technologies and renewable energy sources has been promoted in Varaita and Ossola Valleys (RP) as answer to depopulation and buildings abandon of mountainside villages;
- traditional know-how has been valorised in Walser Mountain Community (RAVDA), with the aim to renew local economy;
- conversion of industrial plants has been developed in Pays Une Autre Provence (CAUE84), as answer to maintenance of Mediterranean agriculture and emergence of new technologies;
- green mountain tourism has been organized in Julian Alps (NTA), with the aim to set up an organization for a better tourist positioning of this destination.

Prospects for competitiveness improvement

The local authorities and the partners defined diverse prospects for competitiveness improvement.

The coherence of territory planning achieved by dialogue, cooperation and relevant organization is a main chance for Baden bei Wien and Bad Vöslau (LI), Aoste Plain (RAVDA), Chiavenna Valley and Verbano Valleys (RL), Idrija (AMGI).

The economic, cultural or tourist development by valorisation and promotion of natural and human resources is an important expectation for Ventoux–Comtat-Venaissin Community (CAUE84), Cuneo Province (LAMORO), Seriana Valley (RL), Walser Mountain Community (RAVDA), Ossola and Varaita Valley (RP), and Julian Alps (NTA).

Finally, attractiveness improvement by promotion of leading roles and planning of structuring facilities or urban projects is a main prospect for Combe de Savoie and Voironnais (IUG), Pays Une Autre Provence (CAUE84), Poschiavo and Roveredo-Mesolcina (GR).

4.5 Challenges and topics

Different challenges for competitiveness

Different challenges concerning the Pilot Areas correspond to main difficulties and potentials which characterize Alpine territories:

The strong growth of the lower part of certain valleys, where population and activities are concentrating around the main towns, needs relevant territorial planning. A polycentric organization, including AS-SLUCs and smaller settlements, with the aim to reduce the dichotomy between dwelling places and working places, is an important challenge for Aoste Plain (RAVDA), Combe de Savoie, and Voironnais (IUG).

The Alpine territories have a strong identity, due to their mountain character; the cultural traditions live on in many places, certainly more than in other regions. A better knowledge of this heritage and the promotion of their particularities represent a tremendous opportunity for economic development of Seriana Valley (RL) and Walser Mountain Community (RAVDA). The mountain areas enjoy a diverse natural capital, including pure water, various mineral resources, abundant wood and specific traditional agriculture (breeding, plants...). These natural resources are insufficiently valorised by local enterprises. With the aim to increase the value added to local productions, some clusters are set up in Pays Une Autre Provence (CAUE84), Ossola, and Varaita Valley (RP).

More than in other areas, in Alpine valleys, where urbanization and transport infrastructures are concentrated, the preservation of traditional landscapes is threatened. The protection and the valorisation of the natural area of Chiavenna Valley (RL) and the urban valorisation of Poschiavo and Roveredo–Mesolcina (GR) are important challenges for tourist or urban development.

Some alpine valleys experienced an important industry development, due to the presence of abundant water or mineral resources; in some other valleys a capillary network of small and medium enterprises was created. In a global economic context, a large part of these activities are precarious. Consequently, the main challenge is to renew the economic

activity, as in Cuneo Province by strengthening of feminine businesses (LAMORO) or in Idrija, by diversification of activity (AMGI). Tourism holds a large part of the alpine economy, but it is also a threat for natural and cultural heritage of the mountain space, with a risk of uncontrolled activity. In Ventoux–Comtat-Venaissin Community (CAUE84), the Charter of tourism development includes sustainability as a priority. In Julian Alps (NTA), the tourist growth prospect needs to improve planning and management.

The quality of life is due to the quality of natural, urban and working environment, but also to the presence of services and facilities: this presence is particularly important in certain mountain territories, where the distances are long. In Verbano Valleys (RL), the rationalization of public services is a main challenge, while in Baden bei Wien and Bad Vöslau (LI), quality of life improvement needs establishment of small enterprises and new facilities.

Some keywords, reflection of the Pilot Projects topics

Considering environment protection, social development and economic development as the three axes which constitute the basis of sustainable development planning, the analysis of the keywords defining the different Pilot Projects shows that the main topics are positioned between environment protection and social development (quality of life, education, participation), and between social development and economic development (cultural development, links between AS-SLUCs and big towns, tourism development). Nevertheless, some Pilot Projects, as in Varaita and Ossola Valleys (RP), establish a link between economic development and environment protection.

The Pilot Projects may be classified according to their main topics, as in the following graph:



[Fig. 1 - Pilot Projects according to their issues]

4.6 Implementation and innovative approach

Different authorities and organizations in charge of the territorial actions

The territorial actions concerning the different Pilot Projects are led by different types of entities:

State

Ministry of the Economy of Slovenia: Julian Alps (NTA).

Canton / Region

Graubünden Canton: Roveredo–Mesolcina (GR);

Regione Piemonte: Saluzzo and Varaita Valley (RP);

Regione Autonoma Valle d'Aosta: Plaine d'Aoste (RAVDA).

Regione Autonoma Valle d'Aosta: Walser Mountain Community (RAVDA).

Intermunicipal bodies

Combe de Savoie (IUG);

Pays Une Autre Provence (CAUE84);

Seriana Valley Mountain Community (RL);

Ventoux – Comtat-Venaissin Community (CAUE84);

Verbano Valleys Mountain Community (RL);

VCO Province and Ossola Valley Mountain Community (RP);

Voironnais (IUG).

Municipalities

Baden bei Wien (LI);

Bad Vöslau (LI);

Idrija (AMGI);

Poschiavo (GR);

Prata Camportaccio (RL).

Local development agency

LAMORO.

The diversity of the responsible entities has characterised the diversity of the project partners, which intervened at different spatial levels, and carried out different roles concerning the Pilot Projects development:

- coordination of planning projects: GR, RAVDA, RP;
- promotion of local policies: LAMORO, NTA;
- support to local authorities: GR, RL;
- consultancy for local authorities: AMGI, CAUE84, LI;
- territorial planning research management: IUG.

The diversity of these roles reflects various approaches in different territorial contexts, which are particularly rewarding for the partnership.

Innovative means for competitiveness

The Pilot Projects implement original means to improve the competitiveness of AS-SLUCs and mountain areas. This innovative approach, based on sustainability, concerns project organization, territory benchmarking, adaptability to local needs, participative processes and valorisation of local identities.

Sustainable development plans

For a better territorial competitiveness, the innovative planning method consisted of an intermunicipal approach based on shared policies in Baden bei Wien and Bad Vöslau (LI), a competition for the “Alpine Town of the Year” in Idrija (AMGI), a polycentric spatial organization in Combe de Savoie and Voironnais (IUG), an interdepartmental approach for facilities and industrial areas in Pays Une Autre Provence (CAUE84), or a strategy designed with relevant stakeholders in Ossola Valley, and Varaita Valley (RP).

Specific planning tools and methodology

Innovative tools and methods have been used for the competitiveness of certain Pilot Areas, as the multifunctional information system of Verbano Valleys (RL), the tools for tourism sustainability assessment in Ventoux – Comtat-Venaissin (CAUE84), the monitoring tool on tourism competitiveness and attractiveness to create new opportunities in Julian Alps (NTA), the benchmarking method in Aoste Plain (RAVDA), or the call for urban and architectural models (GR).

Sustainable development by environmental approach

If a large part of Pilot Projects included environment protection as a priority, some of them conceived environment as a competitive engine: this is the case of the alternative ways of development and land use in Chiavenna Valley (RL), and the synergy between growth and environment, adopted in Baden bei Wien and Bad Vöslau (LI).

Sustainable development by social approach

The social approach is essential to assure a sustainable cohesion: some Pilot Projects are built on innovative approaches which place the human factor as a main lever of competitiveness. This is the case of the education and training initiatives for target groups in Seriana Valley (RL), the involvement of women living in the mountain area of Cuneo Province (LAMORO), and the enhancement of local initiatives and cooperation between individual and collective persons in Aoste Plain (RAVDA).

Sustainable development by economic approach

Pilot Projects founded on original economic initiatives for the enhancement of entrepreneurship include the incentives to the creation of local clusters (health, creative activities...) and the establishment of small-scale enterprises in Baden bei Wien and Bad Vöslau (LI), measures to sustain investors in Idrija (AMGI), a plan to attract specific activities in Pays Une Autre Provence (CAUE84), a market study to define the potential

of typical resources in Walser Mountain Community (RAVDA), and prospected synergies between the municipality of Roveredo and building investors (GR).

Sustainable development exploiting local resources

More than in other territories, in Alpine Space the valorisation of local resources represents an original means of competitiveness improvement. Relevant examples include the following: promotion of tangible and intangible territorial resources of Seriana Valley (RL); enhancement of traditional know-how in Cuneo Province, intended both as a cultural heritage to be transmitted and as an opportunity to increase local income (LAMORO); promotion of local heritage, agriculture and crafts of Ventoux – Comtat-Venaissin Community through the establishment of a “House of the Territory” (CAUE84); planning trading estates where local vegetables will be processed in Pays Une Autre Provence (CAUE84); development of Walser Mountain Community based on traditional productions (RAVDA); recognition and exploitation of endogenous renewable resources for energy production and the building industry in Ossola Valley, Saluzzo and Varaita Valley (RP).

Innovative means for attractiveness

To get over the handicap of mountain territories, which is due to their isolation and remoteness, some original means are necessary to improve their attractiveness. Spatial planning, improvement of services, creation of favourable economic conditions and valorisation of local potential are among the main original means implemented for the improvement of AS-SLUCs and mountain areas attractiveness, within the framework of the Pilot Projects.

Spatial cohesion and organization

Different original means have been used to improve spatial cohesion or services organization, to enhance the attractiveness of the Pilot Areas. Examples of this approach include the management plan of local public services in Verbano Valleys (RL), the plans based on polycentric networks of Combe de Savoie and Voironnais (IUG), the interdepartmental plan for transports, cultural, leisure and sports facilities linking the mountain area and the Rhône Valley in Pays Une Autre Provence (CAUE84), or the strengthening of the relationship between centre and periphery, and between the two centres of Idrija (AMGI).

Accessibility and facilities

Some projects have contributed to the attractiveness of the Pilot Areas improving their accessibility and the quality of their facilities, for instance the plan for proximity-oriented facilities involving the population of Cuneo Province (LAMORO), and the development of facilities for aged people in Roveredo (GR).

Economic opportunities

Territorial attractiveness needs economic development policies, which can be based on original concepts such as buildings for housing and work promoted by the urban plans of Baden bei Wien and Bad Vöslau (LI), or plans for the establishment of wood sector enterprises in Varaita and Ossola Valleys (RP).

Management and promotion of local resources

Some original means have been set up to improve the Pilot Areas attractiveness, based on management and promotion of local resources, namely: the training plan for innovative culture and tourism activities in Seriana Valley (RL); the monitoring tool for sustainability, competitiveness and innovativeness of Alpine tourism destinations (NTA), or the “House of the Territory” in Ventoux – Comtat-Venaissin Community, where tourist office, cultural activities, presentation of local products and other services will be accommodated (CAUE84).

Valorisation of natural and cultural heritage

Finally, territorial attractiveness mainly rests on the quality of natural or urban environment; to protect certain Pilot Areas, specific measures have been set up, such as the plan for valorisation of landscapes and cultural heritage of Chiavenna Valley (RL), the plan for the valorisation of Poschiavo historic centre (GR), and the revitalisation of high-quality-of-life mountain villages in Ossola Valley (RP).

4.7 A first evaluation of Pilot Projects

Methodological premise

The Pilot Projects were the core of CAPACities, being the means through which the theoretical findings and the analyses carried out in the previous working packages could be tested on concrete policy contexts. Assessing the impact the projects had on their respective context is therefore a necessary step to understand which kind of innovation CAPACities was capable of generating, from a methodological point of view as well as on a more practical one. In fact all the partners aimed at innovating their respective policy context through Pilot Projects, following two parallel paths:

- on one hand they tried to introduce new approaches in the way problems are treated. The keywords have thus been integration (in order to overcome a policy approach that is too often sectorial and fragmented), participation (for enlarging the decision-making arena, and including traditionally excluded actors into policy processes) and mobilisation of local resources (for supporting local communities’ capacity building processes and giving them the needed tools for increasing their competitiveness and attractiveness);
- on the other hand they experimented tools and procedures that in all the cases were not strictly part of their ordinary administrative tasks. In other words CAPACities partners aimed at producing some sort of institutional learning, *i.e.* their goal was to test new policy instruments that could possibly overcome the limits that their usual approach to the tackled spatial issues showed.

Understanding to which extent the expected impacts have been obtained, or which side-effects the actions carried out have generated, would require on the one side more time (Pilot Projects ended in November 2010, just four months before CAPACities conclusion), and on the other side a deeper analysis of each specific context. In other words, the efficacy of a policy is a locally-based concept: it is not just a matter of checking if the foreseen and officially stated goals have been reached, but rather a question of analysing the overall

effects, expected as well as unexpected, produced by a certain policy on its context. Here again this can be measured and assessed only in a medium-long lapse of time, certainly not in the few months that have passed after the Pilot Projects conclusion.

The analysis presented here is a sort of first step of an assessment process. The focus is on the interaction that Pilot Projects had with the policy contexts on which they were acting. In fact, a policy is assessed on the basis of its efficacy, and if efficacy can be defined as the sum of the relations that the policy had with its context (expected or not, positive or negative, formal or informal, and so on), then reading the way those interactions were conceived during the policy designing process, and how they developed during the implementing phase, can give some first interesting elements for a reflection on the potential innovative capacity of a policy.

In the framework of CAPACities there has been a specific action, carried out by Regione Piemonte, focused on this issue. The idea was to define an approach to policy design processes that could face some general problems that have been spotted out when analysing AS-SLUCs, and that consisted basically in defining an analytical tool centred on a dynamic/qualitative reading of the Pilot Areas.

As a consequence of this tool, at the end of the Pilot Projects all the partners were asked to fill in a questionnaire aimed at evaluating how the actions carried out interacted with their respective contexts, and more particularly how they treated three crucial problems such as the relation with existing policy frameworks, the mobilisation of local resources, and the relation with governance networks. Before a quick review of the questionnaires results, the next paragraph will summarise the main characters of the analytical tool, so to clarify the process that led to the definition of the questionnaire.

Analytical tool

During the past few decades the dynamics in the field of spatial policies have led to a growing degree of complexity. Even if national contexts are very different, some very general trends can be pointed out:

- there is an increasing number of subjects, both public and private, promoting policies that have (or can have) a remarkable territorial impact. Two facts can be underlined here: EU inputs have considerably changed the approach of local authorities towards public policies, giving them more responsibility and tools (co-operation projects, Urban, Leader...); financial difficulties have increased the relevance of public-private partnerships;
- there is an augmenting fragmentation of competences, roles and fields of action. The word governance (used in a broad and often loose sense) has quickly become the label describing this fragmentation, which frequently generates overlappings, conflicts, waste of resources etc.;
- there have been an increasing number of sector plans, programmes, policies and attempts of designing strategic/integrated tools, often generating some kind of vicious circle that covers every portion of our regions with an impressive number of prescriptions, rules, policy addresses, action plans, etc.

If this is true, each new project should try its best to simplify the policy contexts in which it

is operating, to avoid acting as if with every new project one had to start from scratch and produce new plans, new visions, new guidelines that will be added to the existing ones.

The analysis that has been suggested in the framework of CAPACities consisted in some kind of evaluation of the “policies capital” of the area with which a project is supposed to interact. This should be conducted in form of a *catalogue raisonné* of the main projects, plans, programmes and policies whose object are the selected territories, or which generate remarkable effects on them.

Raisonné is the keyword: the first aim is obviously a survey of the significant plans which have already been designed, whose result is a list. But the following, and more relevant step, is to understand which components of these plans will be translated into concrete actions, following which priority criteria, using which resources, attaining which expected impact on which social, economic, and geographic sector, and so on.

This has to be the result of field-work, meaning that it must be conducted with the active contribution of relevant local actors: an interaction/dialogue with the groups and subjects directly concerned, rather than a collection of data.

Goals

The general goal of this kind of survey is to produce an analytic model through which a detailed map of the main territorial policy processes (existing or potential, activated by public or private stakeholders, and so on) crossing a certain area can be represented. More specifically such a model should spot out:

- possible superimpositions among the goals pursued by different sector policies, or by different territorial government levels;
- possible conflicts among different sector policies (for example policies that pursue potentially clashing goals);
- potential synergies among local actors (potentially complementary policies);
- potential synergies to be activated towards policies at different/larger territorial scales;
- local resources to be mobilised.

Approach

The crucial point for this kind of analysis is to overlap a static reading of the case study (spotting out planning instruments – general or sector –, norms, programmes, etc. that are affecting the territory), with a dynamic view centred on ongoing policy processes, thus on the existing or potential interactions among stakeholders, policies and resources.

In other words the questions to which an answer should be found could be the following:

- which are the explicit intentions of the main actors about the concerned area (what do plans/programmes/policies foresee)?
- which are the resources that these actors are mobilising (or intend to mobilise) to achieve their goals?
- are there overlappings or contradictions between ongoing policy processes?
- are there places for stakeholders to interact (institutional negotiation groups, local permanent commissions, and so on)?
- are there relevant resources that are not mobilised by current policy processes (in terms of financial flows, territorial assets, but also of knowledge, professional skills, political

engagement, etc.)?

- is it possible to attract external resources, and/or to strengthen the links between local networks and external resources?

Instruments

The analytical model is basically a grid indicating *what to look for* (which kind of information should be collected) and *how to look at it* (how the information collected can be read in order to define a significant, qualitative, and dynamic framework of the study area).

The main participatory instruments proposed are:

- non-structured interviews using ‘active listening’ techniques, with a limited number of key local actors (it is particularly sensitive to involve not only public and private institutions representatives, but also those actors who seem under-represented in formal planning processes);
- participative observation of the area, guided by a reference list of issues to be examined on the field, involving random (albeit receptive) population samples in informal talks;
- structured sessions of collective work (e.g. conducted according to the ‘focus group’ technique, or similar) involving small groups of local stakeholders around specific relevant issues. These may work better if linked with other activities such as local festivals, etc. Appropriately adapted, such kind of interrelation may be performed with children, e.g. as a school workshop;
- forums involving medium to large groups of people affected by a certain ongoing or future policy, who are presented something (a short document, an exhibition/display, etc., edited by external experts) to be discussed and possibly amended thanks to their insider knowledge. Particularly appropriate with small- to medium-sized communities, of course in case there is room to allow changes in pre-ordinate decisions. Might be conducted as a single, intensive workshop session as well as a more informal ‘open house’ event.

The questionnaire - Analysing Pilot Projects coherence with existing contexts

The analytic grid proposed was basically a questionnaire with multiple choice answers, so that the results could be easily compared and a general overview on the whole CAPACities cooperation area could be sketched. The main purpose of the instrument has been to analyse which kind of approach CAPACities partners had towards innovating the policy context of the Pilot Project areas, and to evaluate how the actions designed for the project interacted with it – which kind of institutional learning they were supposed to generate, which were the main obstacles they had to face, on which kind of local resources they relied on, etc.

The wide differences of scales, topics, approaches, local contexts, and institutional roles of the partners made it necessary to adopt a quite general point of view: Pilot Projects have been read through policy analysis lenses.

The questionnaire, to be filled in for each Pilot Project area, was organised in four sets of questions:

- preliminary questions on the policy context in the Pilot Project areas;
- questions on the relation with existing programmes, plans and policy tools;

- questions on the main resources mobilised;
- questions on the relation with existing governance networks.

The last three groups of questions were in turn divided into three parts:

- the first one was focussed on the problem-setting phase of the Pilot Project, that is on how each partner of CAPACities decided to treat that specific question in that specific context;
- the second one was centred on the interactions occurred while carrying out the Pilot Project actions;
- the last one was centred on the supposed effects of the actions on the local contexts, given that an in-depth analysis of the outcomes of Pilot Projects will be possible only after CAPACities closing date.

Questionnaires analysis

Topics

The first elements that have been analysed are the general approach adopted in the Pilot Projects, and the kind of topics treated. The most significant elements that emerge from the comparison of the answers given are:

- most of the projects seem to have adopted an integrated approach, even when they dealt with sectorial policies. Fragmented policy contexts are thus contrasted emphasising the links among actions at different scales and on different topics;
- the two key issues are economic development and a more efficient and sustainable exploitation (or activation) of local resources. The two topics are generally strictly connected: a sustainable use of locally available resources (being them tangible or intangible) is seen as the pre-condition for designing development strategies;
- most of the projects seem to integrate or complete the present policy frameworks. Innovation does not necessarily imply the design of new policy or tools: more often transformations occur when existing policies and tools are readdressed and/or redefined, as a consequence of the effects they have – or have not – produced;
- most of the projects are acting at an inter-municipal scale. This is clearer in the Western part of the Alps (North-Western Italy and France), where most of the municipalities are small or even very small, thus lack the financial, institutional and technical resources needed for managing complex development policies. While in France or Switzerland formal and informal means of inter-municipal cooperation are quite common, Italy has still a lot to do in this direction, thus partners took the occasion offered by CAPACities for experimenting new approaches.

Contexts

As stated before, the Pilot Projects were implemented in a wide variety of contexts, both in terms of scale (from a single city like Idrija to a group of hundreds of municipalities like in Cuneo Province) and of socio-economic characters (industrial areas as well as tourist ones, relatively isolated valleys and towns at the boundaries of wealthy metropolitan areas, etc.). Nevertheless, from a policy analysis point of view some common elements arise from the questionnaires:

- in each context there is a wide number of policy tools operating, both spatial plans and integrated programmes. Even in areas that can be defined as marginal in comparison with other Alpine territories, public institutions at all levels have issued a wide range of policy tools, in the fields of economic development, spatial planning, environment protection, and so on. These data means that in most cases the main problem to face is not necessarily the absence of specific tools, but rather the scarce level of coordination (or even inefficacy) of existing ones. Innovation can then once again build the capacity of strengthening and thickening the existing governance networks, constructing a common strategic vision among public and private stakeholders at different levels;
- the local contexts are usually rich in terms of projects, but institutional tools do not always take this richness into due account. This is probably a counter effect of a certain hyper-regulation that characterises many Alpine Space territories: as the number of plans and policies gets higher their capacity of governing concrete dynamics decreases, generating a vicious circle that can seriously affect policies efficacy. Moreover some policy instruments, especially the more sectorial ones, show deficiencies in their capability of interpreting territorial dynamics, with the result of ignoring significant phenomena and projects, thus increasing the context complexity;
- the policy contexts are usually clearer on general goals than on strategies, priorities and concrete actions. This is probably a direct consequence of policy tools that derive from abstract territorial visions rather than from an in-depth knowledge of the local phenomena they are supposed to govern;
- there are often formally defined governance networks operating, but some crucial stakeholders are frequently insufficiently involved. In particular public-private partnership and citizens participation to policy design processes are key issues for almost all the partners, as the existing policy frameworks do not interact sufficiently with this kind of local stakeholders. It is not simply a matter of gathering new financial resources or of increasing the level of consensus on public choices. The enlargement of the policies arenas is seen as an indispensable means, both in the problem-setting phase and in the implementing one, for conceiving appropriate policies, and for ensuring that they reach the expected goals. In fact, there are almost always crucial resources, both tangible and intangible, that are not sufficiently exploited, valorised or mobilised: this seems to depend on the fact that institutionalised governance networks and policy procedures do not always include the stakeholders that control them.

Relation with existing policies

Most of the Pilot Projects paid a special attention to the existing policies frameworks, assuming that the experimentations carried out for CAPACities might produce positive effects only if their outputs are adopted by ordinary policies. The answers to the questionnaire's second section give an overview on the way such an issue has been tackled by partners:

- the majority of projects have a strong relation with existing tools, but just few of them are directly linked to those tools. This datum is probably connected to the experimental character of the projects, and to the fact that they could rely on quite limited resources (mostly in terms of available financial flows and time). A strong and simultaneously

flexible connection with ongoing policies was the condition for adding value to Pilot Projects outputs - as they could interact with existing tools and possibly integrate or readdress them - but at the same time a loose formal connection with those tools allowed a more experimental approach;

- the more common need is to increase the knowledge linked to existing tools, and to implement specific measures. Once again the reason for this need can be found in the weakness of the analytical basis of many policy tools at the local scale. Partners used CAPACities as an opportunity for carrying out activities that are not usually part of their ordinary work, such as qualitative, participative and interactive analysis or the collection of data on a wide range of phenomena. CAPACities gave them the chance to focus on specific territories rather than on specific topics, and to compare those areas with others in the whole Alpine Space. Such activities resulted in an increase of the knowledge level on the areas involved, and this might have direct consequences on future policies designing processes;
- most of the projects act on a strategic level rather than on a merely technical one. Since Pilot Projects were not moving along pre-defined procedural paths, they could concentrate their attention on long-term and strategic issues, building a general framework for development policies. Even those Pilot Projects that worked on a very specific topic had the chance to be inscribed in a wider policy framework, thus to elaborate outputs (guidelines, toolkits, and the like) that took into due consideration the fact that the areas concerned ought to be considered both for their specificities and as part of a wider Alpine Space context;
- the project outputs are supposed to readdress existing policies, and at the same time to constitute the basis for designing new ones. This element probably resumes the whole approach to the existing policies contexts. Pilot Projects had the ambition of producing institutional learning, that is new ways for treating the faced territorial issues, and eventually new appropriate tools for doing it. Only in the middle term it will be possible to verify if and to which extent this goal has been reached.

Resources mobilised

One of the main assumptions of all Pilot Projects was the fact that AS-SLUCs are not suffering from a lack of resources: on the contrary, there are plenty of cultural and environmental assets, know-hows and skills, and even marginality could be turned into an important resource (for example from the point of view of sustainable tourism).

The key point is often that local resources are underexploited, for reasons that might vary a lot in each context (including, for instance, a deeply rooted parochialism that makes cooperation difficult, the crisis of an industry-based development model, and many others). First of all, Pilot Projects aimed at identifying them, and then at defining possible ways to better exploit and valorise them.

Among the common elements that could be found in the answers to the questionnaire, the most significant seem to be the following:

- all the projects have been designed together with local communities, mostly with

institutions. Most CAPACities partners are public institutions at regional or provincial/departmental scale (or even national in the case of Slovenian ones). The fact that the Pilot Projects have been built through a strong interaction with local communities even in the design phase has to be considered as a quite innovative fact, and as one of the main possible effects on future behaviour of the institutions concerned (both at the regional and at the local scale);

- the majority of the projects goals was to attract external resources, mostly technical and economic. Beside the activation of local resources, most Pilot Projects aimed at strengthening the link between concerned areas and the main urban and economic networks. It seems to be a two-steps process, meaning that the mobilisation of local resources is the condition for increasing the attractiveness of an area, and at the same time for making external investments generate added value in the local economy, rather than just exploiting it;
- almost none of the projects mobilised economic resources. This seems to be a weak point in the Pilot Projects, even if the activation of such resources was generally not one of their explicit objectives. Probably CAPACities was not the right instrument for addressing financial investments to the Pilot Areas, and probably some positive effects could be attained only in the long term;
- the process of activation of local resources has happened mostly outside institutionalised frameworks, often through informal agreements. This is probably a crucial point, and a good indicator of the innovation potential of the Pilot Projects. In fact institutional innovation (methodological, procedural, or any other kind) is usually a bottom-up process that comes from practices, passes through a testing phase, and then gets institutionalised - where it is transformed into a formally defined procedure and becomes part of ordinary practices. The Pilot Projects were in the middle of this process: they took some already existing practices (for example participatory processes, or sets of indicators for the evaluation of competitiveness, etc.) and they tested them into specific AS-SLUCs, adapting them to the peculiarities of each context. The institutionalisation of these procedures depends from many factors, from their results to the capacity each institution has of absorbing innovation. In any case it is not a easy nor a quick process;
- the key factors for mobilising local resources seem to be the strengthening of links among sectorial policies and the thickening of governance networks. These are general issues that characterise many innovative policies in a number of fields of action and at various scales. In a context such as the Alpine Space they are even more relevant, as quite often local stakeholders in AS-SLUCs show a scarce attitude towards cooperative policy models, especially when the small dimensions of municipalities would require it the most. In some cases local actors need an external help for overcoming parochialism, and regional authorities can play a key role in this field.

Relation with governance networks

Local governance networks in the Pilot Project areas have been the main focus of many Pilot Projects, and in all the others a special attention has been paid to this issue. The reason for this choice is quite simple: even the best designed policy depends on the active contribution

of a large number of stakeholders, both public and private. Thickening the relations with those subjects should thus be a priority in every decision-making process, otherwise its efficacy might be seriously affected. Some interesting points emerge from CAPACities partners' answers to the questionnaire:

- most of the projects have been designed through informal interactions with local actors (mostly public, but also private stakeholders and sometimes citizens' organisations). The choice of opening the decision-making processes to a number of actors since the very first stages of Pilot Projects probably depended first of all on an analytical need: the point of view of local subjects could guarantee a thicker knowledge of internal dynamics, of stakes at play, of potential and actual resources and so on. Through this involvement Pilot Projects have been designed in accordance with local needs, rather than as a result of a problem-setting phase based on merely quantitative data, or on objectives defined from the outside;
- informal public-public coordination networks have been the key tools for projects implementation. In all Pilot Projects the active involvement of local public stakeholders has characterised the whole process, as one of the common goals was to use CAPACities experience for improving the quality of local policies contexts – or in other words to use the project for producing outputs that could be meaningful and useful for local communities. In fact, the strengthening of local governance networks has been perceived by partners as one of the most common positive results of the projects, even if the consistency of these networks could appropriately be measured only in the middle-long term;
- finally, the majority of governance networks strengthened by the projects lays at a local scale, and includes always public institutions, often private stakeholders, and more rarely technicians and NGOs. Not all the Pilot Projects were completely successful in this perspective. Probably this depended on the specificities of local situations partners had to deal with: some areas had previously successful experienced integrated programmes or policies and participatory processes, while for others this was quite a new approach. Completely open decision-making processes are usually efficient and effective only when the institutional governance networks are already strong and used to cooperative work.

5 thematic guidelines & tools

Authors

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For the Thematic Guidelines and the Tools, authors are quoted at the beginning of the grids.

5.1 Small Alpine towns and territorial planning

The CAPACities project partners had some trouble agreeing on a definition of Alpine Space Small Local Urban Centres (AS-SLUCs). Some partners have indeed shown that the criteria used by the Anton Melik Geographical Institute (altitude, population and job centrality index) or by Regione Lombardia and Politecnico di Milano (population, job centrality index, population growth rate and elderly index, as defined in Chapters 2 and 3) are not easy to apply when analyses are carried out at a local level rather than at the scale of the whole Alpine region.

The trouble faced by project partners – each one immersed in different historical and cultural realities – were essentially a consequence of the fact the “small towns” refer to qualitative appreciations related to what the French call “*vie sociale*” or “local community” in English.

The need to take qualitative factors into account

The value of quantitative criteria is indeed relative. The population threshold used to define a “small urban centre” can for example depend on the communes territorial structure. Small municipalities (with a population of less than 1,000) account for 70.8% of all municipalities in the French Alpine Convention perimeter. The figure in Italy is 45.2%, and only 3.3% in Slovenia.

This means that in France, these small urban centres are made of several communes, whereas in Slovenia – and to a lesser extent in Italy – they only include one municipality. Taking altitude into account requires a reduction of the population threshold from five thousand to one thousand when the communes are located at 1,000 m or higher. This approach implicitly reflects the assumption that population density decreases with altitude – something which is far from being applicable to all Alpine areas.

Let us therefore come back to a more general definition of small towns, referring to criteria that are for example used in sociology rather than in geography, such as community and anonymity. Unlike the metropolis, which, according to a tradition that emerged with the works of German philosopher Georg Simmel, a small town is characterised by the predominance of community (Simmel, 1903). Recent researches show that the predominance of community on anonymity is accompanied by a specific history and local culture. Today, these small towns are on the one hand striving to preserve their autonomy and identity whilst attempting at better integrating in a regional network of towns, in order to strengthen their attractiveness and competitiveness (Roques, 2009).

Small towns can therefore no longer be dealt with as autonomous entities that structure their hinterland, but as centres, which play a specific role and have particular functions within an urban system. The assertion of their role is not necessarily accompanied by population growth and/or decreasing average age. This has been shown by the CAPACities project: between 1999 and 2006, the population growth rate of France was twice as high in communes with a population of less than 1,000 (14.76%) than in communes with a population of 5,000 to 20,000 (6.04%).

Small towns in their urban region

The rise of mobility, first due to rail transport, then to the automobile, was accompanied

since the 1970s by a progressive blurring of the limits between towns and rural areas and by the formation of vast urban areas which include agricultural and natural areas (Calthorpe, Fulton, 2001). This phenomenon is of course also found in the Alps, where new forms of complementarity between small and medium towns appeared in valleys, rural communes and winter sport or holiday resorts. It takes on different forms in different European countries. Suburbanisation can primarily concern residence (as it is the case in France), or industry when it is based on local production systems (for example, in Italy). Comparing the *rurbanisation* approach (Bauer, Roux, 1976) and the *città diffusa theory* (Indovina, 1990; Secchi, 2000) can help in understanding such differences.

Small towns depend on large conurbations for the employment of their populations. They therefore compete with new centralities (the edge towns) such as business parks or techno parks, suburban areas dedicated to recreation, as well as public amenity nodes and large shopping centres. They are no longer able to offer all services for a given population, and have to think about the specificity of their role within an urban region, the latter being increasingly characterised by a polycentric organisation. Reflecting about the functions of a small city in terms of the way they complement those of a megacity, of large towns and of new centralities has led to abandoning approaches focussed on the communal level, in favour of an analysis of population centres and labour pools.

Production and employment: the only bases of local development ?

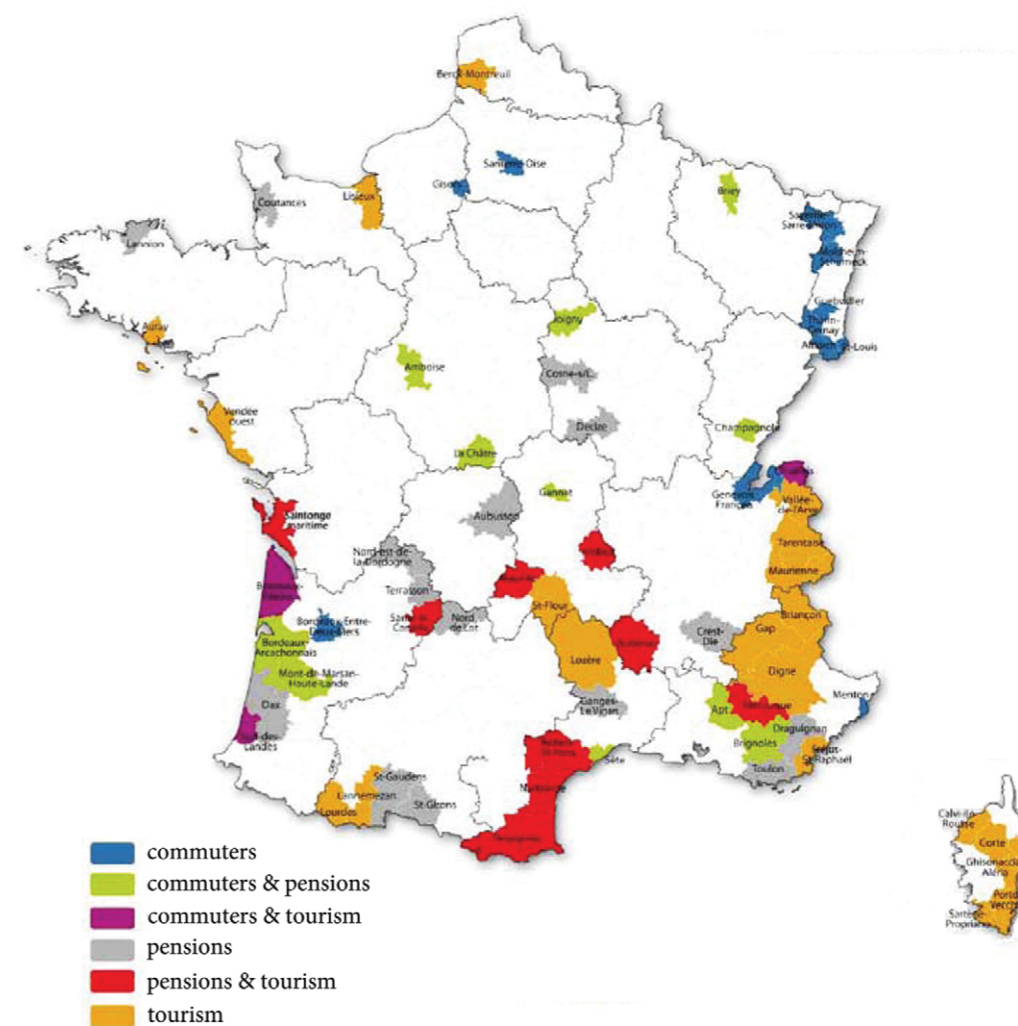
The job centrality index, chosen to define Alpine Space Small Local Urban Centres, implies that centrality depends on the availability of jobs in the perimeter of a commune. For many years, such a valorisation of the role of production in the local development process has led to an overestimation of the importance of large and medium sized towns as employment poles. The “economic basis” (*base économique*) approach explains the development of territories in terms of flows of income that are drawn into the area and of cash flows stemming from consumption rather than by the creation of wealth (Gross National Product) (Davezies, 2008).

This way of seeing things allows to explain phenomena that were previously difficult to understand. The forces driving economic development come from “basic” revenues, which fall into four main categories:

- the productive basis (*base productive*), which includes revenues from capital and work, and comes from selling, to other areas, goods and services produced in the area;
- the public basis (*base public*), in other words the salaries paid by public administration bodies;
- the residential basis (*base résidentielle*), which includes revenues that depend not on production, but on the local residential market (commuters’ salaries, pensions, spending related to tourism...);
- the social basis, corresponding to sanitary and social transfers.

Statistics produced through this approach show that in France, the respective shares of bases are: 21.9% for the productive basis, 45% for the residential basis, 10.3% for the public basis and 22.8% for the social basis (Davezies, 2010). In most provincial conurbations, the productive basis (revenue from production and services) represents a quarter of the

total basis - hardly more than pensions. This balance between revenue from production and service activities and pensions is very similar in conurbations like Grenoble, in which the share of metropolitan jobs in high - by metropolitan jobs we mean jobs in research, technology and business services (Talandier, 2010). The links between the typology of forces driving development, demographic growth and the evolution of employment are even more interesting when it comes to understand the role of small Alpine towns. Figures show that both on a long and short period of time (1975 to 2006 and 1999 to 2006), the regions, where the residential basis is predominant, are the champions of demographic growth: +31% between 1975 and 2006 (+17% at the national level), +9.1% between 1999 and 2006 (+4.9% at the national level). The same goes for job creation (Davezies, 2010). The regions where economies are more residential than productive - evidence suggests that small Alpine



[Fig. 1 - Different typologies of residential territories in France. Source: Davezies, 2010]

areas fall into this category - appear to be in a particularly good position to generate a demographic and employment growth process (e.g. in the homecare service sector), this no longer being linked to the accommodation of new industrial production activities.

The attractiveness and competitiveness of Alpine Space Small Local Urban Centres are therefore not only linked to their positioning as centres of activity and employment. They also depend on their capacity to retain their populations (young people, families, retired persons) by offering intermediary housing and a level of amenity and services that is similar to that found in larger towns. Competitiveness and attractiveness can therefore not merely be examined from an economic point of view.

Small Alpine Towns in territorial planning

Going beyond a strictly statistical definition of AS-SLUCs allows to throw new light on the way in which they are taken into account in territorial planning. Small Alpine towns are no longer autonomous from an economic and social point of view, but are part of the polycentric organisation of urban regions. Hence the need to implement territorial planning at an intermediate level, between the scale of the region and that of the commune. Such is the aim of experiments currently underway in various European regions : *Schémas de secteur* or *Projet de territoire* in France, *Piani strutturali comunali in forma associata* in Italy or *Schémas directeurs* in Switzerland.

In order to be strategic, such territorial planning should be based on the involvement of civil society actors (Trigilia, 2005; Bagnasco, Courlet, Novarina, 2010). It should produce a series of orientations related to:

- strengthening of an identity based on local culture and history;
- defining of a specific role for the area within the polycentric structure of the urban region (residential centre, amenity and service centre for rural populations, centre of economic activity, cultural activities targeted at attracting users from other areas);
- searching for complementarities between the functions of the small city and those of emerging centres such as commercial malls, business parks, centres for leisure and poles of inter-modality;
- identifying forms of housing which are able to retain families and retired people (detached houses, blocks of flats, with a good mix of rental and home ownership);
- searching for urban forms that allow to integrate agricultural and natural areas in towns;
- promoting non-motorised transport modes that guarantee sustainable territorial development.

Small Alpine towns must - through territorial planning - attempt to implement strategies that contribute to strengthening their capacity to manage their own development, and seek a better integration in the network of centres that structure the urban region they belong to.

5.2 Thematic guidelines - Introduction

This chapter describes the most relevant methodological elements deriving from CAPACities experience. These include the approaches adopted, the way territories have been analysed, the kind of questions to which answers have been sought, etc.

In other words, the points of view on local development each partner adopted have been

here summarised and discussed, in order to derive methodological instructions that might be valid at a general scale, well beyond the single occasions that generated them.

This chapter describes the most relevant methodological elements deriving from CAPACities experience. These include the approaches adopted, the way territories have been analysed, the kind of questions to which answers have been sought, etc.

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A method is an investigation technique, which is ordered, repeatable, and self-correctable, and which can warrant the attainment of valid results.

The concept of method may be extended to every way towards a certain scope. It consists in following rules, aimed at a certain efficacy, and save one's strength; it is a means to contrast arbitrariness. A methodical action is cumulative, and typically proceeds by steps (Granger, 1977-82).

Two tendencies may be recognised among the authors who have theorised about methodology: it can be assumed as an algorithm (recipe, procedure), or as a strategy. The characters of a strategy are: the global view of situations; the capacity of discerning "singular points"; the mobile repartition and concentration of forces; the non-rigid determination of the priority in actions.

Outside the realm of exact science, the method tends to assume the form of strategy (e.g. guidelines, etc.) rather than that of algorithm. The scientific nature in planning methodology may rely, among other things, on renouncing to mere technical operation, consisting in the application of 'model' solutions - and starting every time from the appropriate definition of goals, available resources, criteria to use them, and criteria to choose among possible solutions, according to a systems approach.

A first level of analysis of collected methodologies concerns their nature and scale of operation. The following short descriptions have been arranged in the following sequence: First, come those methods which relate to plans and services that are specifically needed in mountain areas, as opposed to those mainstream, standardised ways to manage a district, that are assumed as valid in any geographical or social context, but fall short of their goals (if not downright counterproductive) when applied to low-density Alpine areas.

A good part of contemporary speculation on territorial policies deals with how to guarantee a decent access to public functions and services, not to speak of equal development opportunities, to every community.

As much of the population has moved to the plains, or has grown there while remaining more stationary in the mountain areas, in several Alpine regions there's an obvious unbalance in political strengths at stake (public money tends to go where the majority of voters are, neglecting depopulated areas). This obviously applies to more centralised countries, while federal ones generally succeed in maintaining a good level of self-administration and quality-of-life standards. The specificity of Alpine areas was even recognised by the Roman Empire, that made them separate administrative entities called *Alpes Maritimae*, *Alpes Cottiae*, *Alpes Poeninae et Graiae* (Pauly-Wissowa, s.v.). We won't dwell on this point, as the principle has

been recognised by the Convention of the Alps (see for instance the “Spatial planning and sustainable development” Protocol of Implementation), and detailed investigations have been made elsewhere (see for instance: Bätzing, 2003; Reolon, Morandini, 2010).

It is obvious that the recognition of mountain specificity in the way policies are designed, or, if one prefers, the adaptation of policies to such territories, is a pre-condition to the construction of a self-centred, authentically sustainable attractiveness and competitiveness of Alpine urban centres, whose problems and opportunities vary widely from one state, and even one region, to another, as it has been clearly shown in chapter 3.

A second group of methodologies relates to the relationship between the Alpine core and the highly urbanised plains which surround it. A particular focus has been put on some of those Alpine fringe areas whose socioeconomic dynamics are largely dependent on phenomena originating from peri-Alpine metropolises, such as Vienna and the Rhone valley conurbation.

Somewhat comparable dynamics can also be envisaged in the relationship between infra-Alpine towns (e.g. Grenoble, Chambéry, Aoste, Bellinzona) and neighbouring areas which have been affected by urbanisation phenomena in the last decades. In the Alps, in spite of the relative wealth in resources, economic development patterns can rarely be self-centred – they are largely affected, or even driven, by economic ‘engines’ situated in large towns, if not in the geographically un-specific ‘global market’. Many methodologies try to tackle this quixotic issue – for instance those developed to identify local (actually or potentially) strong industries, such as plant products in Pays Une Autre Provence, wood and renewable energy in Piemonte, and locally-rooted tourism in Idrija and in Walser Mountain Community.

Their attempts might hopefully turn out to be successful in increasing the competitiveness of their respective AS-SLUCs in the next years, and even inspirational to other local systems. But, again, it seems that only a much larger political awareness and commitment, in coherence with the principles of the Convention, might re-balance the largely outside-driven economies and even societies that are found in many parts of the Alps, above all those lacking an appropriate degree of autonomy.

From this point of view, it seems particularly appropriate that participatory methods be adapted to the Alpine context, in order to spread awareness and responsibility among citizens. Such an inclusive approach dwells on techniques which were first developed in urban and also country areas, and are seldom experimented at the local-system level in mountain areas.

Finally, the largest group of proposed methodologies can be referred to sectoral policies, both large-scale and local, of course in the framework of Alpine specificity. A quite wide range of issues is covered, including environmental, social, and economic ones.

Far from being parochial, their “adaptation and adoption” potential appears high although the issues that have been faced stem obviously from local needs and development perspectives. Altogether, the methodologies represent a set of intervention opportunities, that CAPACities makes available to support the attractiveness and competitiveness of whatever territorial entity in the whole Alpine Space, and particularly those local systems that we defined as “AS-SLUCs”.

A first, partial, evidence of such claim is that CAPACities partners themselves have exchanged

the methodologies they were elaborating, in order to hybridise their approaches making them stronger and more diverse in front of the multi-dimensionality of the problems they tackled.

The following table shows at what degree such interaction has imbued the Pilot Project(s) each partner has developed on one or more areas:

Table 1 - Methodological exchanges among CAPACities partners		
cluster	proposed by	adopted by
sustainable development	AMGI	4
local planning processes	RL	5
strategic planning	LI	6
economic valorisation of local resources	CAUE84	3
participation	IUG+RAVDA	3
energy and renewable resources	RP	2
sustainable tourism	NTA	2
revitalisation of historic centres	GR	2
gender policies	LAMORO	2

According to the local context, the partners have crafted action methodologies, putting the accent on weaknesses such as isolation and depopulation, on assets such as traditions, identity, social capital, and environmental quality, and on goals such as environment protection, amelioration of the quality of life, strengthening cooperation, building networks and databases, developing existing opportunities, and creating the appropriate conditions for economic change. Such keywords are recurring in most of the partners’ papers, making the mutual exchange experience very promising.

Coming back to the methodological point of view, it seems relevant to discuss if and how the partners’ proposals can be effective outside the context they were first designed for. This can be theoretically assessed beforehand (i.e., before attempting to use such methods in different places), analysing if their structure seems appropriate to guide and facilitate operativeness.

A first criterion is the capacity of describing large-scale situations, through the elaboration of a synthetic vision, and the clarity of global goals. Most methods have successfully met this criterion; we’ll mention here just a few examples of general goals which may be common at the Alpine Space scale:

- preference for locally-centred, bottom-up, participatory approaches in spatial and economic planning (RP, RAVDA, IUG);
- adaptation of policies and planning models to mountain areas (RL);
- re-balancing development patterns (CAUE84);
- inter-municipal integrated approach (IUG, RAVDA);
- exploration of the dynamics between AS-SLUCs and smaller municipalities (e.g. urban functions, demography, etc.) (LI, IUG);
- preference for environmental protection over economic growth (AMGI);

- promotion of a plurality of lifestyles, and of high levels of quality of life (AMGI, LAMORO);
- tendency towards self-sufficiency, and emphasis on diversification, stability, and protection against possible crises (AMGI, RP);
- recognition of the local communities' right to decide about their own energy resources (RP);
- tendency towards a synergy between endogenous and exogenous resources (CAUE84);
- coupling traditional wisdom and modern technology (RP, CAUE84);
- recognition of the importance of the role tourism plays in economic development (RL, NTA);
- inclusion of competitiveness indicators in sustainable development assessment models (NTA);
- monitoring as a most efficient tool towards a practical implementation of sustainability (NTA);
- recognition of the contribution of the Alps to electricity and fuel production, *i.e.* to meeting the global energy needs (RP);
- in energy policies, priority to consumption reduction (RP).

A second criterion consists in considering a method's analytic potential, that is its capacity to fully understand the local context and build upon it. A number of proposals are very sensible with regard to these aspects, among which:

- positioning (*i.e.*, assessment of current situation), and development of objectives stemming out of the local identity and vision (LI, GR);
- good husbandry and adequate use of local potential (AMGI);
- inventory of local natural, cultural, and human resources, with particular emphasis on traditional ones; subsequent preservation and environmentally friendly exploitation of such resources (CAUE84, RL);
- analysis of local resources based on temporal approach, encompassing past and future (CAUE84);
- identification of emerging industries, and use them to lever a broader local economic renewal (CAUE84);
- self-generated local activity, deeply connected to local ideas (AMGI);
- identification and use of residual energy sources, available at the local scale (RP);
- customised community service and facilities provision: these are fundamental for the consolidation of small urban centres (RL, LAMORO).

A third criterion is a method adaptability to specific conditions, such as place, actors, resources. Given the extreme diversity of Alpine Space, this issue has been properly recognised by all partners. Actions and approaches include:

- adaptation of development models according to local environmental, cultural, political, and social relationships and problems (AMGI, GR);
- intervention at an inter-municipal scale, bringing together now utterly fragmented administrative competences (RL);
- promotion of cooperation and collective management (AMGI);
- participatory design of measures (LAMORO, RAVDA);

- local development processes based on a new “deliberative democracy” which values social capital (RAVDA, IUG, RP);
- recognition that socioeconomic organisation of Alpine valleys is to be coherent with the organisation of production (RAVDA);
- recognising and valorising local knowledge and goals (GR);
- reciprocal exchange of utilities: positional, service supply, leisure, residentiality, etc. (LI, IUG);
- providing network supports (LAMORO, GR);
- according specific attention to: renewable resources, isolated territories, small-size communities (CAUE84);
- counteracting depopulation trends (RL);
- increasing social cohesion (IUG, RAVDA);
- providing attractive residences, workplaces and leisure facilities (GR);
- rethinking logistics and transport models (RL);
- measuring the average thermal consumption of buildings according to the locally available energy resources (RP);
- participatory choice of assessment and monitoring indicators (NTA).

Finally, also the adaptability of the temporal structure theoretically foreseen is crucial in order to allow local differences enrich the process, without obstructing it. A step-by-step approach proves apt in such cases. Some partners have dealt with this issue, providing suggestions on a few relevant points:

- comprehension of post-Fordist principles of flexibility and decentralization (AMGI);
- establishment of network connections among developmental factors and actors (AMGI);
- adoption of techniques for the resolution of conflicting interests (LI);
- optimisation of current planning instruments and development of innovative ones (LI);
- recognition that public interest is the result of a construction, allowing social critique and discussion of different viewpoints on a long timescale (RAVDA);
- strategic, step-by-step construction of new relationships between the civil society and public authorities (RAVDA);
- implementing feasibility checks in various phases of the process (GR);
- recognising the crucial role of women in keeping alive mountain communities, and introducing appropriate measures to make them stay there in the future (LAMORO).

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Sustainable regional development and policy

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The aim of sustainable regional development and policy is to adapt regional development to environmental, cultural, political, and social relationships in the region. Its core challenge is self-generated local activity, and therefore it seeks deep connectedness to local ideas.

Together with global economic changes, environmental issues have come to the fore. Consequently, political and economical transformation has raised awareness about the devastating consequences of past economic activities and limitations connected to crucial natural and energy resources. The current generation's aspirations have exceeded existing material potential and threaten reserves for future generations. To prevent the ever-growing insatiability of leading economic centres, a new development paradigm was developed at the Rio de Janeiro Conference in 1992. According to this concept, sustainable development is regarded as development that suits the needs of current generations and does not threaten potentials for future generations. Future generations should have the same opportunities to fulfil their needs and to choose their lifestyles (Agenda 21, 1992).

Sustainable regional development is based on new values such as environmental protection, plurality of lifestyles, and quality of life. It involves development of a sustainable economy, good husbandry, and adequate use of regional potential, without endangering ecological factors. The new values are the result of a complete mental shift, which gives environmental protection preference over economic growth.

The concept of sustainable regional politics is based on three long-term goals: economic growth, social harmony, and environmental harmony, which clearly demonstrates its orientation towards the future (Elsasser et al., 1995; Becker, 1995). The realization of these three main goals would improve the quality of life within the limits of the Earth's bearing capacity. The prevailing opinion is that sustainable regional policy would not represent a halt to development, but would introduce forms of development that would satisfy the needs of society today without preventing suitable development possibilities for the future. Regional development in the 1970s and 1980s showed a great conflict of interests among various developmental factors, but in the 1990s a stronger tendency towards cooperation and collective management came to light. Together with information, communication, and coordination, cooperation should offer possible solutions for innovative and developmental problems. This kind of cooperation is based on the assumption that a country and its government are not a monolithic unit, but a polycentric entity, constituted by a number of actors collaborating in a whole managerial network, engaged in solving problems. An important role is played by organizations mediating between the government, market, and all private elements (Knieling, 1994). The principle of cooperation as the paradigm of social management can be connected to post-Fordist principles of flexibility and decentralization (Cramer von Laue, 1997).

The primary aim of the Pilot Project, within which the scientific and the administrative level are combined (i.e. CAPACities project), is to secure long-term development of protected areas in the Alps based on the latest scientific findings.

An important condition for sustainable development is the economic basis: the goal is to form a self-sufficient structure in the sense of local production for the local population through the use of local resources. But while the economic aim is to secure the economic independence of the region, the main emphasis should be put on diversification, stability, and protection against possible crises.

Establishing network connections among developmental factors is also very important, as well as the inclusion of economic perspectives into spatial and development plans because economics defines lifestyle, culture, leisure, and infrastructure.

Socio-cultural goals are to support regional cultures, traditions, and identity. The selection of various sports and cultural events paves the way for a more qualitative way to spend leisure time and indirectly a higher quality of life.

The environmental goal is the preservation of living spaces, which depends on combining natural environmental conditions and regional development while taking into the account the entire ecological potential (Cramer von Laue, 1997).

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Local planning processes and their relationship with regional spatial planning

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The experience gained in CAPACities Pilot Actions has showed that it is vital for AS-SLUCs to act together in order to reach the critical mass necessary to enhance their role, to save financial resources, to optimize service provision, to improve technical skills and to give more effectiveness to local policies and initiatives. This may be obtained:

- sharing aims and objectives;
- cooperating in order to carry out common planning instruments;
- improving knowledge, information and creating common databases;
- ensuring basic services and facilities in order to sustain and maintain population and enterprises in the Alpine area.

There are at least two main categories of issues to be considered regarding local planning processes: governance issues related to the management of complex situations involving a high number of stakeholders whose interests often diverge; and policies related to the identification of adequate solutions to the critical issues of fragile mountain areas.

The main governance issues are:

- the awareness that new complex situations call for a substantial rethinking of public planning, its procedures, customs and functions;
- the size of the area affected by the plans, and the relationship with large area plans and/or strategic plans;
- the relationship with sector plans and the coordination in formulating their objectives and managing their implementation.

The main policy issues are:

- the need to preserve and manage natural and environmental resources in order to meet emerging demand of improved liveability;
- the need to support a tourism-driven turn in local economies, in order to exploit resources like historical heritage, and crafts;
- searching for new, customised modes and requirements in community service provision, in order to address the changing demands of local communities and the rise of new users;
- the urge to counteract depopulation trends that severely affect certain areas, and to envisage measures to draw new population;
- the need to rethink transport models and city logistics in accordance to emerging social uses, commuting phenomena, and changing job market geographies.

The experience gained in the framework of CAPACities pilot action has confirmed that the Alpine Space requires a different approach to local planning processes in order to enhance sustainably its attractiveness and competitiveness. The more significant elements for an effective policy are:

- to support integrated planning in order to preserve and exploit the local natural,

- environmental and historic resources which are broader than municipality borders;
- to aim at achieving durable results in policies and local planning processes;
- to follow a bottom-up approach in planning processes, with a broad involvement of citizens, encouraging cooperation in designing local plans, and starting from that territorial capital which is recognised by the citizens (common territorial capital);
- to look for innovative and environmentally friendly methods to exploit natural, territorial, environmental and landscape resources;
- to face common problems going beyond administrative borders and formal competences;
- to apply the principle of horizontal and vertical subsidiarity in planning matters.

The main issues to be taken into consideration when approaching local planning processes are:

- the large fragmentation of administrative competences in areas needing integrated projects;
- the high cost of planning and acting in a general situation of lack of economic resources from public bodies;
- and, finally, that standard policies and planning models (very general and not contextualised) are normally not suitable for mountain areas.

Strategic planning and inter-communal cooperation within the vicinity of metropolitan areas

Author	DI Herbert Liske
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In areas such as Lower Austria, the main strategic issues for the development of AS-SLUC for what strategic planning is concerned are:

- definition of own positioning and development of key objectives, paying particular attention to the conflicting areas between economically dynamic urban zones at the foot of the Alps, and the Alpine space proper, with its top-quality natural expanses and landscape; focus on the regional environment, viewed “from outside” and “from inside”; exploration of the functions that AS-SLUCs might furnish to neighbouring smaller municipalities (e.g., utility supply, social- and health care facilities, employment opportunities) and to larger conurbations (recreation, residential sites);
- management of different interests concerning space utilization and requirements: avoiding conflicts and securing sustainability;
- creation of networks of AS-SLUCs and joint articulation of specific interests, strengths, requirements and problems, also addressing the neighbouring conurbations;
- development of specific, highly flexible instruments regarding all details, in order to react to changing frame conditions, and integration of evaluation processes.

When designing a policy or a plan in the field of strategic planning, the most relevant issues to be analysed are:

- identification and analysis of opportunities and threats: determining relevant general and specific indicators fed by an appropriate database (observation of time series and representative reference values);
- “quality of life” as main focus of the thematic analysis in the light of competitiveness and attractiveness (residential and living space, level of employment, quality and quantity of services supply, as well as social and technical infrastructural facilities);
- analysis of possibilities of cooperation at different levels: inter-communal cooperation, regional, national and trans-national networks with thematic focus;
- optimizing current planning instruments in terms of the specific requirements of AS-SLUCs (e.g.: regional and local development concepts, zoning and land-use plans); and development of innovative instruments (e.g., utilization of the towns’ possibilities and activities under private law).

When designing strategic planning policies in the Alpine Space, the following approaches seem to be particularly effective:

- utilization of (AS-SLUC) networks: “Learning from others”;
- participation of decision-makers and the general public interested in certain issues, themes and activities;
- development of modular, flexible planning instruments;
- process-oriented planning procedure accounting for monitoring and evaluation phases.

When implementing strategic planning policies in the Alpine Space, the following problems

should be taken into due consideration:

- lack of specific policies and activities for the Alpine Space (particularly regarding transition zones), apart from the thematic programs concerning agriculture and rural space, and the city/environs issues;
- lack of long-term key goals at inter-communal level; monitoring and evaluation processes for advanced development are to be integrated;
- policy adjustments at different levels is mainly achieved by more or less binding specifications; lack of feedback process;
- complex fiscal aspects (public budgets) within the framework of inter-communal planning work: budget alignments of partners (e.g., for project initiatives), compensation of expenditures/returns between partners, quantification of savings potential and savings by indirect returns.

Economic valorisation of local resources

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The Pays Une Autre Provence is an unbalanced territory: on one hand, the Rhone valley, with “Competitiveness Clusters” based on nuclear industry and fruits and vegetables transformation and marketing, on the other hand, a wide mountain area that is very depopulated because of the decline of agriculture in the last 150 years.

The main strategic issue for the development of AS-SLUCs linked to the mountain area such as Buis-les-Baronnies, Nyons, Vaison-la-Romaine or Valréas, is to identify some emerging activities, with the aim to strengthen and develop them, and thus to contribute to their competitiveness. The main activity sectors concerned are “environmentally friendly” building, health and well-being products and services and, most of all, transformation of plant products.

A strategy for economic regeneration is set up, giving prospects to some activities (cosmetics production, healthy and organic food production, distillation by molecular extraction issued from nuclear technologies...) with research and development, in order to create value added and employment. About plant products, the Pays Une Autre Provence develops a “Competitiveness Cluster” on “Perfumes, aromas, fragrances and flavours”, and a “Rural Excellence Cluster” on “Plant products valorisation and transformation”.

When setting up a Plan for trading estates, concerning valorisation of local resources, different relevant issues are analysed:

- local resources: Inventory of local natural and human resources, valorised or not, with the aim to define specific sectors to be strengthened and developed. For example, in the Pays Une Autre Provence, there are traditional activities issued from mountain agriculture: but the value added, locally issued from the transformation of plant products, is insufficient.
- enterprises: Inventory and analysis (from data bases, enquiries and interviews) of companies whose activity is based on local resources. The data bases bring information about the enterprises (date of creation, size, turnover...); enquiries and interviews give knowledge on future development, market and growth prospects.
- activity clusters: Inventory of sites or estates, with location and territorial context (networks of enterprises, urban planning regulations), services and infrastructure, typology of companies, land available for building.

At least two different approaches concerning economic valorisation of local resources seem effective in the Alpine Space:

- historical and prospective approach on local resources. The mountain areas, like Alpine Space, hold many specific natural resources: among them, a large part are not exploited or insufficiently valorised, since they were supplanted by industrial processes and products (e.g.: medicinal plants); but it is also true that, during the last century, new industrial technologies were developed in the Alpine Space (e.g.: hydro-electricity). With the aim to improve competitiveness of the Alpine Space and its AS-SLUCs,

past, present and future resources must be taken into account, to find more economic development opportunities.

- approach by synergy between endogenous and exogenous resources. In the present complex economic system, local development can't be based exclusively on endogenous resources, particularly in the Alpine Space where resources are insufficiently diversified. A synergy between endogenous and exogenous resources must be found, particularly for what the use of new production and information technologies is concerned.

When implementing the economic valorisation of local resources policies in the Alpine Space, the following problems should be taken into due consideration:

- renewable resources: If an uncontrolled exploitation of natural resources menaces their depletion, the risk of environment deterioration (e.g. loss of biodiversity...) is particularly high in mountain areas. In this context, it's important to base local economy on a sustainable development model, where only renewable resources are used.
- isolated territories: In the Alpine Space, many territories are far from important services and transport infrastructure, from qualified human resources clusters (university towns) and from leading enterprises with their subcontractor clusters. However, in the field of immaterial economy, the new information and communication technologies contribute to reduce the isolation handicap.
- little size: In the Alpine Space, a large part of economic and territorial structures are small: this can be a disadvantage for territorial promotion, and, above all, for enterprises which face international competition.

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What place for participation in territorial planning?

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Information, consultation or participation

Recent years have been characterised by the advent of sustainable development and the rise of environmental concern, but also by the crisis of representative democracy, reflected in the weakening of elected representatives' legitimacy. New official texts have been adopted as a consequence of these trends (article 10 of the Rio declaration, the Århus Convention and the *Charte de l'Environnement*, which is integrated in the French constitution). These documents have made it compulsory to inform citizens and to allow them participate. International legislation establishes the evolution of the role of citizens in decision-making processes and the progressive replacement of information and consultation systems through participation.

The right to information requires from national, regional, and local authorities that citizens be consulted. Most of the time, this happens after decisions have been made. This is an instrumental approach to public action, whereby the inclusion of people helps in adopting objectives and orientations – the latter mostly being defined by policy-makers, in other words by political decision-makers and experts. Such an approach is based on the notion that public interest can be defined *a priori* and is guaranteed by public authorities – most importantly by the State and its administrative apparatus. Informing the public and consulting residents are therefore perceived as a way of facilitating the definition of objectives. Only the State can assess whether these are in line with public interest.

The public, which is invited to information meetings or is asked to provide a point of view during consultations, should be competent to do so and represent an interest group (a social, professional or age group, a neighbourhood, a community). In all consultation processes, the citizens' points of view are only taken into account if they express an opinion, which is not too specific or associated to what policy-makers refer to as NIMBY behaviour. But the outcome of this instrumental approach is rarely successful: the viewpoints expressed are often those of local residents. *Citizens* in the wider sense never take part in the process. Therefore, authorities that initiate consultations complain about the poor quality of the outcomes, due to the lack of competence, or representativeness, of those who are consulted (Fourniau, 2008).

The right to participate stems from a more political conception of collective action: for example, article 2 of the Århus Convention states that the public can be defined as “one or more natural or legal persons, and, in accordance with national legislation or practice, their associations, organizations or groups”. Here, public participation is not based on an *a priori* definition of the public interest and does not assume that a competent and representative public is required. Rather, it highlights the determining role of the systems and methods upon which the deliberation process is based.

One of the main characteristics of experiences in this field¹ is to let an independent and neutral third party handle the dialogue so as to guarantee the debate's functioning in a context often characterised by an uneven distribution of resources among stakeholders. The public interest is the result of a construction, which allows the discussion between different points of view on a long timescale. This process also allows for social critique and cross examination of specific viewpoints. The ability to achieve this depends on the quality of the deliberative process, which should not merely take the form of deals and bargaining (Novarina, 2005).

Participation is one of the processes of deliberative democracy. What is at stake here is the engagement of a negotiation process based on common learning. Bargaining or deal-making assumes that the various parties involved negotiate on the basis of interests that are known from the start. However, as part of the deliberation process, the persons involved are aware that they have a limited knowledge not only of their own interest, but also of the interests of others involved. Hence their need to learn through face-to-face exchanges such as plenary sessions, meetings, or workshops. In this sense, “learning from deliberation can lead to far better outcomes for both parties than the more short-sighted compromises of deal-making” (Forester, 1994, p. 156).

A parallel can be established between the expected results of deliberative democracy and the way some sociologists analyse the role of social capital in local development processes. Italian theorists who have examined industrial districts were the first to highlight the links between systems of small and medium enterprises and local communities in forming socio-territorial entities (Beccatini, 1992; Bagnasco, 2003). The North-Eastern and central regions of Italy feature an “urbanised countryside”. In these areas, the emergence of districts is linked to the existence of social capital, made of relationships based on trust and reciprocity, and informally produced by the local community. Similar cases can be identified in mountain areas with a strong agricultural base.

Social capital in local communities

In the Middle Ages, the thriving economy relied on local resources and on place-specific cultures. The social organisation of Alpine valleys was generated in close relation to the organisation of production, and particularly that of agriculture. Peasants – and more specifically those families who had settled for a long time in the same area – had a high degree of autonomy *vis-à-vis* feudal families in terms of land management.

Social life and land use habits were established and sometimes transcribed in local legislation.² These habits enabled the management of different interests and common rights. Such sets of rules identified, among other things, public or private persons in charge of investment in the area, and those who overlooked road or canal maintenance. In Aosta Valley, a meeting was traditionally held on a public square in order to define the duties to be carried out as a group during the following week. The entire society was thus involved in the management of resources and in the economic production process.

¹ Commission Nationale du Débat Public in France, strategic planning in numerous European towns, public examination of major infrastructure project.

² See for example the Coutumier of Aosta Duchy, 1580.

Traditional lifestyles declined during the 20th century. A new way of life was adopted as from the 1970s, after agricultural activities were almost abandoned and the people were uprooted from the valleys. As a consequence of the economic boom of the 1980s, tourism became the main activity found in the Alps. The tradition of local management was progressively abandoned as a result of the transformation of local societies and of regional lifestyles.

New users have repopulated the Alpine valleys: tourists who settle there on a seasonal basis, new permanent populations who can rely on new technologies for teleworking, retired persons in search of services and of a good quality of life, young families who wish to acquire a house at a price lower than in urban areas. Urban sprawl and motorised vehicles are both the cause and the consequence of the fact that workers can commute from even quite remote places. The dispersion of local communities has led public authorities (Regions, Provinces and Municipalities) to deal with territorial development and management. Entrepreneurs and non-governmental organisations alike see public authorities as service suppliers and are not as involved in local governance as they used to be.

New modes of building social capital

The decline of autonomous rural societies has therefore led to the erosion of “primordial social capital” which had informally appeared in local communities. This situation has led development project leaders work on organisational design, to produce new forms of social capital (Coleman, 1990). This way of working offers numerous opportunities to interact (seminars, workshops, commissions, working groups, issue-based meetings, forums): face to face interaction is needed for learning purposes and to establish new habits – such as economic and social innovation –, the latter being a prerequisite for adapting to change. Experiments in what is referred to as strategic planning were led in various European towns (Birmingham, Barcelona, Bilbao, Lyon, Torino...). These experiments somewhat inspired the work of some CAPACities project partners.

Strategic planning reflects a will to change public action establishing new relationships between the civil society and public authorities. It relies on new principles and on experimenting new methods. It acknowledges and values the civil society’s capacity to organise itself. It generates innovative forms of public action, which are not so much based on governmental action as they are founded upon agreements with enterprises, universities and public service agencies. It devises a plan, generated through continuous interaction with social players. Participation is a goal in itself rather than a tool (Trigilia, 2005).

This approach relies on the adoption of sophisticated systems, initiated by public authorities, facilitated by non-governmental organisations and based on a wide range of discussion arenas (issue-based meetings, plenary sessions, working groups, citizen forums).

Strategic planning is a renewed form of social interaction, which favours direct interaction between people (stakeholders or ordinary residents) as opposed to the official relationships publicised by institutions. The aim of such a system is to put people in precise spatial situations and in a face to face position in order to encourage them to move away from pre-established roles that may stem from their economic or social status, from their ideologies, or from their being confined to a local or community-based group (Bagnasco, Courlet, Novarina, 2010)

Some CAPACities project partners wanted to experiment a new social organisation process based on participation, in coherence with the aforementioned approach. The aim was to encourage the involvement of local players in governance-related choices and raise awareness as to the need for a new “deliberative democracy”. The Autonomous Region of Aosta Valley thus sought to strengthen the link between territorial planning and local development as part of projects designed with the civil society.

The regional administration made a first step by reversing roles. Until recently, communes, NGOs and populations depended on regional administrations and occasionally turned to them to express a request. The team in charge of the project met local councillors, non-governmental organisations and economic actors, and carried out interviews to identify their engagement in territorial planning and the ways they could get involved in local development choices. These interviews aimed at:

- identifying the activities the organisation carried out;
- ascertaining the interests represented;
- identifying the actions that are foreseen in the area;
- determining the critical situations related to each player’s economic and social activities;
- understanding the potential interaction between the development of private activities and the territorial planning process;
- imagining a shared territorial planning process that would enable to strengthen possible local development.

Interviews were based on reputation. The sample of interviewees was built through a “snowball effect”. This method consists in informally asking each interviewee to suggest other people whose point of view deserves to be heard. The stakeholders who were contacted through this process reacted in a positive way: they were very interested in the fact that the project team sought to meet them, listen to them and discuss their projects. Therefore, the team in charge of this process succeeded in building trust.

Public entities are in charge of territorial resource management, service organisation, economic development, and territorial marketing. Their action consists in understanding the interaction between private activities and territorial planning. In particular, they should draw planning directions so to increase the efficiency of governance. It is often private actors who create wealth and generate economic development. Their representatives are therefore the main interlocutors of local authorities and regional administrations when it comes to territorial planning, and infrastructure or service development projects.

In order to attain a shared vision of the territory future, in Aosta Valley it was decided to progressively encourage the emersion of a strategic analysis based on the common identification of assets, problems, existing projects, and desired interventions. The issues discussed during this first phase – getting to know the area social and cultural potential – were analysed during a series of interactive workshops. Issue-based workshops and events such as walking or cycling tours have been organised so to attract as many people as possible. The aim of such approaches is to show that carrying out an in-depth survey of the area can be enjoyable. “Shock workshops” were also organised, in order to show the long-term effects of “non-planning” and “non governed” evolution.

In the Aosta Valley experiment described in this paper, the methods and systems used to

encourage local players to participate are based on two principles. First, debate takes place as close to the *places* as possible, rather than in the city hall meeting room. Second, those who are in charge of meetings and workshops do not hold a position in an institution and have no interest in the projects. In this case, the team included consultants from the Aosta Valley and the French organisation BazarUrbain.

The work carried out by Institut d'Urbanisme de Grenoble consisted in organising student workshops to showcase candid visions of territorial transformations – visions that were then used as a basis for discussion with local players. The methods used for this project were wide-ranging but nonetheless based on the idea that calling in a third party to carry out the mediation or research is a good way of getting local players move away from their narrow cognition and get involved in building an open vision of their territory's future (Stone, 1993).

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Energy and renewable resources

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The Alpine Space has got a great energy production potential for what renewable resources are concerned. In particular, the Alpine Space has almost everywhere been a net exporter of wood (used for general building purposes and as a fuel, also after transformation into coal), and early industries have been located at the foot of the mountains in order to exploit direct hydro-mechanic power. The same renewable resources are used today, in the form of hydro-electric power and biomass (wood logs, chipped wood, wood pellets...) to be burnt (thermal generation and co-generation).

Such resources are quite evenly distributed all over the Alps, which means that the potential local benefits of their exploitation might be quite equally spread. Actually, the generation of profit for local communities broadly varies depending on national regulations, contracts in force with large energy production companies, and the possible presence of local energy production companies.

The Alps are net exporters of energy, both in form of electricity and fuel production. Generally speaking, the local availability of renewable sources of energy exceeds even the contemporary high levels of consumption, because of the low population density, and the relatively low per capita energy consumption (mountain climate asks for a higher energy consumption for heating, but the density of energy intensive industries is much lower than in the surrounding plains).

At a more local scale, this means that at least in some territories it might be possible to sustain a considerable amount of local energy needs making use of residual energy sources overlooked by large companies and entities, either for their marginal dimension (e.g., micro-hydro) or for the degree of organisation which their exploitation would imply (e.g., forest management). This might mark a remarkable step towards a locally-centred development approach, based on the sustainable, endogenous exploitation of resources.

Designing a policy on energy: what to look for

It appears particularly promising to understand an AS-SLUC as an integrated local system of resources and to design its energy supply and consumption in a sustainable way: see for instance the *Azienda Naturale Comunale* ("Communal Natural Company") which is being launched in Sampeyre (in Cuneo Province).

Preliminary data to be collected include: geomorphology (altitude, acclivity, exposure, etc.), climate (degree-days, annual hours of sunshine, precipitations), etc.

Information about the actual and potential production of wood is also very relevant; this implies knowledge on the distribution of vegetation (biotope categories extension, soil fertility, etc.), accessibility, land property, etc.

Extensive, detailed research should be conducted on CO₂ emissions due to building heating (in the two Piedmont areas we've analysed, the average is 1,14 t/y per capita for residential buildings, ranging from 0,60 to 2,41 t/y), and on CO₂ absorption due to forests.

The overall balance will probably be positive: the woods of a certain mountain system

centred on an AS-SLUC will absorb more than locally emitted. In the cases we've studied, local emissions from residential heating systems would amount to a mere 19÷22% of total absorption capacity. At the global level, the heating amounts to about one third of the total, other relevant items being other energy production and transportation. Given the rather scarce population and industry densities and the relevant local production of 'green' energy, both areas can be safely assessed as net absorbers of Green House Gases.

As long as energy production and consumption are concerned, information should be gathered on:

1. how much energy is currently produced in the area? from which sources? for which use? how much of it is exported, and in which form?
2. how much energy is currently consumed in the area? from which sources? for which use?
3. is the balance of (a) minus (b) positive? if so, which are the benefits at the local level?

Estimates of the amounts of energy producible with the current technologies, from local renewable sources (sun, biomass, wind, water) should be calculated. These should be compared with present consumption levels, according to their possible uses, to establish local energy integrated policies.

In the two cases we studied, data showed that the thermal energy produced from local renewable sources will not be enough to cover the present levels of consumption. For instance: the 19% of the total roof surface would be needed to cover the residential consumption with solar systems (thermal and photovoltaic), but only a fraction of it would be appropriate and usable for installation; burning all the sustainably withdrawable biomass would allow to heat the 18% of the built surface in each of the two Pilot Areas, at the present rates of consumption. Only a factor 6 reduction in the average thermal consumption would allow to heat the buildings using just the locally available wood.

Also the embodied energy of building products (production/transformation + transportation) is a very relevant issue.

Crucial approaches

Local communities should find at the proper political level recognition of their right to decide about their own energy resources, or at least to be appropriately repaid.

The contribution to the national ecological balance offered by mountain forests in terms of CO₂ absorption might also be economically recognised.

The most 'green' of all energy sources is not to use it in the first place (the "negajoule" concept). To attain an acceptable degree of sustainability, the first and foremost intervention should be on the demand side, not on the offer side. The priority goal for energy policies should be to reduce energy consumption, without which no renewable source, whatever its abundance and conversion efficiency, will ever allow a 'sustainable' system. In the built environment policies, priority should be clearly accorded to the reduction of envelope thermal losses.

A public service of energy consumption assessment, certification, and advisory might be particularly useful to promote both public and private energy retrofit of existing buildings. Local energy production (e.g. thermal energy produced in individual boilers; electricity

from small hydropower plants; etc.) might be integrated with grid-connected back-up (e.g. district heating; electricity from dams and/or wind turbines). Albeit promising, such integrated systems aren't economically competitive at the moment.

Close cycles at the local level, wherever possible

The scale of production plants might be a relevant issue (a system made out of a larger number of small plants that use resources available in their proximity might be more efficient than a few big plants).

Traditional buildings use local, low-embodied energy building materials; passive solar gain; and insulation from natural materials such as straw, wood and snow; and they often exploit high thermal mass and animal heat; etc. These principles are still valid, but the actual performances of such buildings are insufficient to meet the expectations of contemporary lifestyle: an architectural approach with couples traditional wisdom with modern technology is called for.

Possible problems in implementing energy policies in the Alpine Space

Governance problems: the sharp edge between fragmented local experiences and centralised policies. Coordination of local energy policies and identification of appropriate governance level for energy production authorisations. Local control of local resources should be a goal.

Economic problems: local energy initiatives should be able to generate economic benefits in short terms. It is crucial to foresee strict links between local production and local consumption (to involve also local stakeholders in the policy design and implementation process).

Environmental problems: renewable resources are limited, so different uses might collide. E.g., organised electricity production in a new, purpose-built power plant which burns biomass and has possible thermal by-products (district heating) might subtract the fuel for the diffused production of thermal energy in house wood-burning boilers. Furthermore, renewable energy sources may be sometimes not too environmentally friendly: just think of the impact of dams on water life, particulate pollution from biomass burning, and the visual impact of wind turbines placed on mountain ridges.

Technical problems: the installation of insulation layers as well as PV arrays and solar thermal collectors in existing buildings is a delicate matter which calls for a particular care to ensure functional durability and respect for the historical and natural environment.

Sustainable tourism

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Sustainability debate has taken the world by storm since the publication of the (infamous) Brundtland report (United Nations, 1987). Even though much theorizing and discussion has been and still is being done in the global sustainability debate, and the results are only partially visible, one can easily claim there has been, at least in western society, a growing awareness of environmental and social concerns over the last couple of decades. As tourism can be a powerful tool for successful economic development on a local and national scale, naturally the question arises (Stubelj Ars, Bohanec, 2010): how can tourism be made more environmentally friendly while remaining an interesting and attractive experience for customers and still generating economic prosperity? The answer may lie in ecologically sustainable tourism, which primarily focuses on the experience of natural areas and the fostering of environmental and cultural understanding, appreciation and conservation (Ecotourism Australia, 2008).

Obviously, it is this type of tourism the one that most immediately resonates with the Alpine space. Although the terms 'sustainable tourism' and 'ecotourism' are often used as synonyms, scientifically speaking the contemporary tourism sustainability conceptualizations move away from purely green, eco or nature-based forms of tourism and extend into different types of tourism (including the mass one) which, when planned, managed and monitored carefully, can be considered as sustainable (Miller, Twining-Ward, 2006).

Moreover, a notion dealing with competitiveness of the tourism sector and overall sustainability needs to be elaborated, as often extremely competitive examples of Alpine ski tourist resorts (e.g. mega purpose built high altitude resorts in the French Alps) fall short of contributing to overall sustainable development of the territory. Thus, a combination of competitiveness and sustainable development models is needed when trying to implement an efficient system of tourism sustainability monitoring in the Alpine Space, since monitoring is generally accepted as a general prerequisite and one of the most efficient tools for the shift towards a practical implementation of the sustainability concept (Miller, Twining-Ward, 2006).

Systematic monitoring gives the insight into actual development and shows the deviations from strategically planned development, so to change its direction before the damage is made. The primary components of such an indicator system, i.e. the measurement categories or indicators, play an important role in assisting decision-making processes and can be used by both policy-makers and the general public (Schnell, Umbach-Daniel, Johnsen, 2003).

The observation in Slovenian Alps showed, that at present there is no appropriate measurement and that the tourism development is uncoordinated and dispersed. On the other hand, the importance of tourism for the economic development of the Alpine regions is shown to be very high, and greater effort should be put in the sustainable development of tourism.

In a large part of the Alps the law limits the possibilities for economic activities, accelerating the development of micro and small companies, and making tourism one of the few and

in some parts even the main economic activity. For this reason, NTA produced a general monitoring tool to help regions to monitor and manage their own development in a more sustainable direction. The tool is composed of sustainable tourism indicators and indicators for measuring sustainable development of the region in general, as well as some of the major determinants of most commonly used competitiveness models. A coherent framework for a monitoring system has been derived from existing theories and definitions of sustainability and later coordinated with project partners and regional stakeholders in order to tailor it to the specifics of the Alpine Space. A systematic model for the identification of indicators for sustainable tourism development has then been established, drawing upon state of the art theories about sustainability indicators, which should help Alpine regions develop their economic activities in sustainable manner.

Once the sustainability monitoring system is implemented in an Alpine region, various local tourist destinations can benchmark how they are performing in various aspects of sustainability (e.g. in environmental, social and economic terms). Similarly, the monitoring system should also provide answers, whether past policies have had the desired effect, or whether new ones would be needed. The trends that can be observed make the tourism planners aware of potential negative changes and serve as an alarm to restrain the negative impacts and trends as soon as they start appearing; the system can thus lead to more efficient and therefore also more sustainable destination management in the Alpine Space.

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Revitalisation of historic centres

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The strategic issue for the development of AS-SLUC for what revitalisation of historic centres is concerned is building a process including three steps:

- carrying out a demographic, economic and social analysis of the historic centre(s);
- assessing the current situation through a SWOT analysis, to be conducted in a workshop attended by local experts. The participatory SWOT analysis would tackle “Settlement and Geographical Issues”, “Economic Issues”, “Social Issues”, “Environmental Issues”, and “Institutional Issues”. This overall view allows to identify the key future challenges;
- designing a programme aimed at upgrading the attractiveness and the competitiveness of the historical centre(s). Such programme will be the result of discussion and selection in a workshop of experts, and will be based on the knowledge and the perspective of local actors, merging different development strategies.

When designing a policy or a Plan in the field of Revitalisation of historic centres, the most relevant issues to be analysed are:

- identification of problematic areas / buildings;
- identification of development models, that on the basis of concrete tasks are generating contemporary and attractive residences, workplaces and recreation places.

It is important that the strategies and development models are realistic and feasible.

When implementing revitalisation of historic centres policies in the Alpine Space, the following problems should be taken into due consideration:

- poor financial resources;
- lack of a common strategy/overall concept shared by the stakeholders;
- insufficient information, both on local decision-makers’ and inhabitants’ side;
- often, the local stakeholders do not recognize territorial promotion as a valid strategy.

Gender policies

Author	LAMORO Soc. Cons. a r.l.
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The most relevant issue for what gender policies are concerned is to ensure a good quality of life in mountain areas. Some elements must be considered as the basis of an action plan to ensure equal opportunities between men and women:

- first of all, a flexible and efficient network of facilities and services for the conciliation between family and working life;
- quality of women’s employment: vertical segregation (attaining positions of prestige are not an automatic consequence of a greater presence of women in the workplace), horizontal segregation (originated from stereotypes about the supposed capacities of women), organizational flexibility and any pay gap between men and women;
- finally, the culture of sharing family responsibilities: what is the workload of women and the extent to which man is involved in care work.

The most efficient approach is a consultation that involves women and subjects whom women use to deal with. The experience taught us that women do not accept easily bottom-up approaches, often built up by a male point of view that does not consider their own exigencies and their own familiar needs. Moreover it is very important that consultation and active involvement do not concern only women, but also decision makers and stakeholders at the local level: in this way a real gender mainstreaming can be reached, skipping out on sectarian and isolated actions. Further fundamental elements are: the openness of ideas and intentions, and the language used. Implementing the Pilot Project we saw the importance of a direct language approach, preferably brought by those who give voice to the territory. The implementation of equal opportunities policies in mountain areas should start from the assumption that women, with their ability to adapt to difficult living conditions and their attitude to be both at the centre of family, and occupational life, represent the “strong link” in the communities to which they belong. Women ought not to be considered as a category to be protected, as the weak link of an area in trouble, but as a huge potential in the place where they live. The woman holds important knowledge concerning the use of resources, health systems, and traditional local customs; by her nature as a mother, she is environment respectful. Where women stay the mountain does not die - but a development in harmony with the land is needed, which would seize and exploit the opportunities it offers to human beings.

5.4 Tools - Introduction

The main goal of this chapter is to identify operative tools, that may be used by public and private stakeholders in the Alpine Space for putting into practice the methodological guidelines defined in chapter 5.2. To compile this chapter, each partner was asked to produce information on:

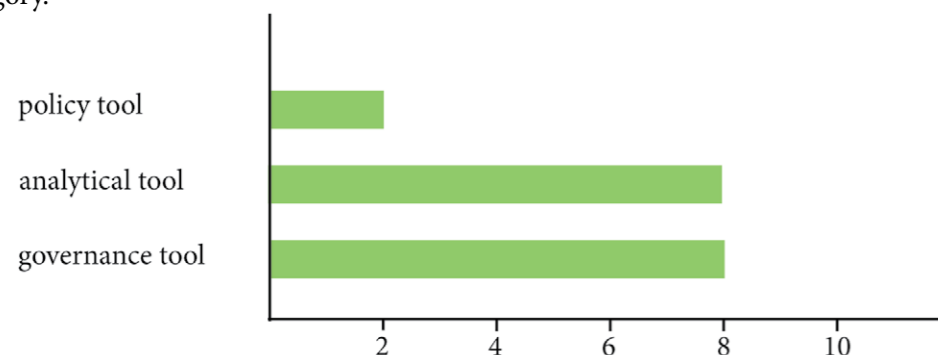
- the tool's goal (what can it be used for);
- its guiding principles (why has it been designed that way);
- its contents (a description on how it works);
- if available, an example of how it has been tested at a local scale and which results it produced.

In the first stance, a distinction among the tools according to their nature was proposed:

- analytical tools, for example sets of indicators that could be used to define the problem that a policy/programme/plan should face;
- policy tools, for example a specific kind of integrated plan. Here again the differences among the various administrative contexts in the Alpine Space suggests to identify only the main transferable elements of each tool, and to let aside all the most locally-defined elements. If e.g. the tool is a landscape plan, the components to spot out might be the kinds of actors (public and/or private) that it involves, the kind of resources that are mobilised, the kind of actions that it foresees, rather than its normative peculiarities or its procedures;
- governance tools, i.e. all those instruments that try to deal with the management of policy processes and of the interactions among stakeholders (for example tools for enhancing participation, managing public-private partnerships, etc.).

The tools prepared by CAPACities partners are presented according to such sequence, having in mind that they might select one or more of them according to what they judged more appropriate.

It might be of some interest to observe that out of 13 tools – one for each partner, except Regione Lombardia that submitted three, and Regione Piemonte that submitted two – 8 are analysis tools, 8 policy tools, and 2 governance tools (see figure 2). The sum is higher than 13 because of multiple choices. This fact is illuminating: a number of tools are 'hybrid' in the sense that they somewhat defied categorisation, or at least did not fit into one single category.



[Fig. 2 - Tools according to type]

It is in the nature of projects promoting innovation, as CAPACities is, to allow or even call for procedures that are at the same time able to analyse and describe complex phenomena, and introduce ways to deal practically with such complexity in development policies.

From this point of view, it should not be surprising that just two tools were considered as 'governance' tools – and still, both cases are in fact adaptive procedures to deal with quite complex participatory processes that first of all produce an agreement on future development objectives (inter-municipal co-operation in the case of LI; more general local development goals in the case of RAVDA), and only later provide with the social and political basis for managing the related implementation processes.

In sum, what implicitly all partners agree on is that – to intervene on specific contexts such as mountain areas are especially – common knowledge and analysis methods are not enough.

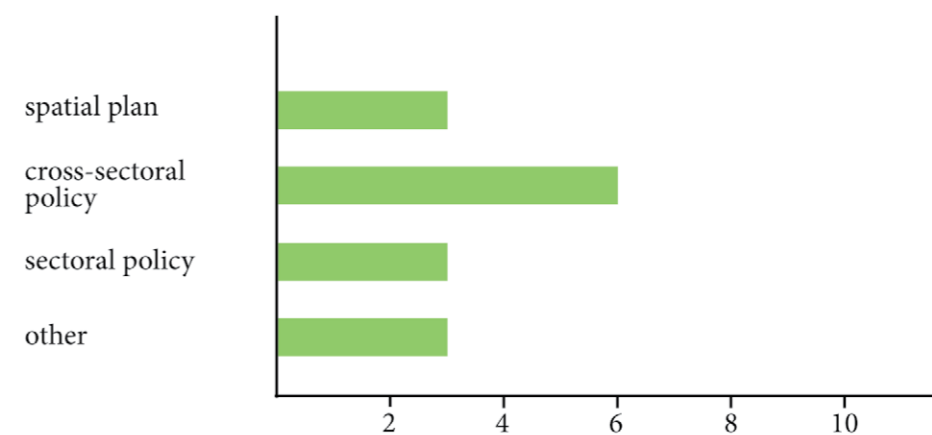
If one wants to concretely and operationally identify those locally available resources that can be sustainably (both socially and ecologically speaking) exploited, on which to build realistic prefigurations, a specific, 'local', or 'situated knowledge' has to be developed, which will synergically integrate usual representations (Geertz, 1983; Haraway, 1988).

Moreover, as we'll see further on, in many of the proposed tools, the construction of such descriptions explicitly integrates local knowledge as expressed through participatory methods involving private stakeholders and individual citizens.

RP, LAMORO, CAUE84, and two of RL's tools, among others, well contain analysis procedures grounded on local, often on-site, research.

As long as a second categorisation is concerned - the one asking partners to label their tools as 'spatial', 'sectoral', 'cross-sectoral', or 'other' -, it seems that choices were more neat, with just a few overlaps. (These being Regione Piemonte's tool no. 6, Kanton Graubünden's no. 8, and Regione Lombardia's no. 10, all deemed as regarding 'spatial planning' and 'cross-sectoral policies' at the same time). One of the tools – namely, no. 2 by IUG – was not assigned to any category (see figure 3).

The graphic shows quite clearly that 6 out of 13 classified tools are meant as instruments concerning cross-sectoral policies affecting a large spectrum of issues that can hardly be



[Fig. 3 - Tools according to type]

encapsulated into categories – and, for that matter, that inherently call for a wide number of subjects to be dealt with appropriately.

Once again it is shown how experimental procedures allow room for at least trying to reconnect dispersed knowledge, and power, being recognised more or less explicitly that without some degree of co-ordination and integration between policies any development strategy – much more when the ultimate goals are so general and ambitious as ‘competitiveness’ and ‘attractiveness’ – will fall short.

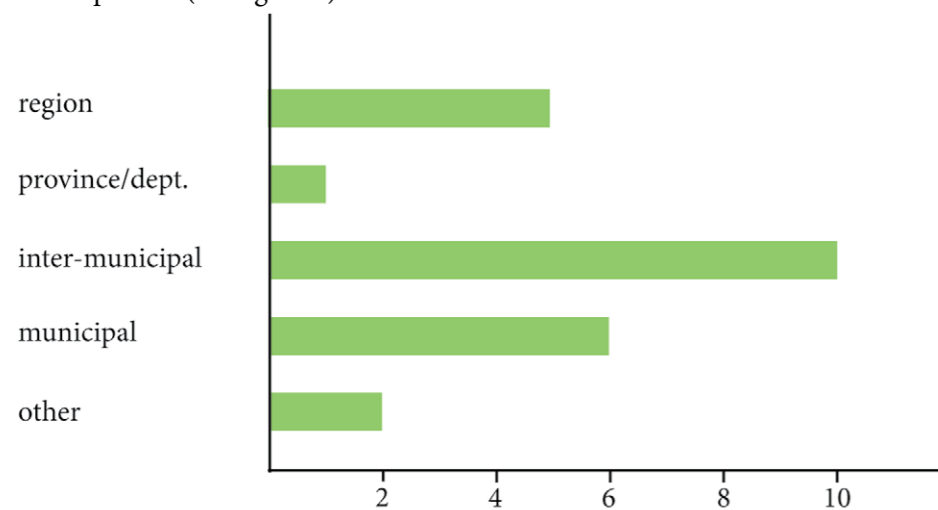
As it has already been noted, three of the tools aimed at supporting cross-sectoral policies are also relevant with regard to spatial planning (RP, tool no. 6; GR, no. 8, and RL, no. 10). One more tool was designed for sustaining strategic planning practices (RAVDA, tool no. 13).

However, five proposed tools opt for clearly thematic fields: monitoring and benchmarking in the case of NTA tool no. 1; gender policies in the case of LAMORO tool no. 3; refresher course for local administrations in the case of RL tool no. 4; economic development in the case of CAUE84 tool no. 7; and service provision in the case of RL tool no. 11.

Nevertheless, also in the majority of these cases the quite specific operational fields were identified as relevant as to producing flywheel effects in the local socioeconomic system at a more general scale: namely, the development of a qualified tourism industry, the summoning and merging of the local collective knowledge, the survival and strengthening of women’s businesses, and the establishment of innovative albeit niche industries were seen, in their respective contexts, as possible key elements which may affect positively the overall local dynamics, that are often very marginal and gravely hit by negative trends.

In other words, the choice there seems to have been to identify a single element from which to re-start a critical, sometimes endangered local system, that, if it evolves successfully, will provide with a more stable basis on which to build a more generally positive quality of life.

The geographical and administrative level of the proposed tools is, in 10 out of 13 cases, the inter-municipal one (see figure 4).



[Fig. 4 - Tools according to geographical and administrative level]

This choice has been made sometimes as single, more often in association with upper and/or lower levels.

There is an obvious indication here that development policies regarding mountain territories, even in case they include relatively large towns (such as, e.g., Aosta), cannot be managed appropriately without including a more or less large number of neighbouring municipalities constituting a local system (Regione Piemonte, 2008).

Sometimes this even implies the suggestion that a super-ordinate administrative level might be created, perhaps on a voluntary base, in order to facilitate the co-operation of more or less small municipalities. Such bodies might possibly be goal-oriented (i.e., explicitly define that the development of a certain area is their mission), as it happens in France with law 99-586 of July 12th, 1999, or in Italian ‘Mountain Communities’ according to Piedmont Regional Law 19 of July 1st, 2008.

Whatever the form – new institutional body, permanent commission, informal ‘area committee’, local development agency, technical task force, etc. – of such co-operation, the large majority of CAPACities partners agree on the fact that a flexible, open relationship might be sought between dispersed institutions and powers in order to attain a new level of efficiency in public policies.

The only exceptions are RL’s tool no. 4, RP’s no. 6, and AMGI’s no. 12, which consider existing institutional levels as appropriate. In the first case – that was applied to valle Seriana as a Pilot Project – no intermediate level is deemed appropriate notwithstanding the fact that the Mountain Community played an important role in connecting municipal counsellors and officers participating in the course with the regional level. In the second case it is judged that the provincial level might be appropriate - when closely integrated to the municipal one - to promote and manage a policy on mountain villages revitalisation.

In the third case the municipal level is deemed as the correct scale for the design and further implementation of a development strategy.

Probably such judgements, albeit correct when applied to the specific case, are the consequence of local conditions and might need to be revised in case of use in other Alpine areas. In fact:

- in applying a course such as the one proposed by tool no. 4, the significant role played by intermediate, local institutions or co-ordination bodies such as Italian Mountain Communities might be fully acknowledged both because it helps bringing the appropriate ‘critical mass’ together, and because it may greatly benefit from the results of the course itself;
- there might exist notable differences between a small and homogenous province as Verbano-Cusio-Ossola is (where RP’s tool no. 6 was developed) and larger and more diverse provinces – Cuneo in Piedmont itself might be a significantly different case;
- while Slovenian municipalities are in average quite large both in terms of population and territorial extension, making it perfectly appropriate to draw a development strategy at that level, there are many areas in the Alps – mainly, but not only, in the Western part of the mountain system – where municipalities are so small that it wouldn’t make sense (not to speak about the feasibility in terms of available resources) to draw a development strategy for each of them.

When it comes to defining the legal framework, 8 tools out of 13 are identified as 'experimental procedures'.

This is utterly coherent with what we have been discussing so far, since in many cases CAPACities provided the opportunity to bring in some innovative practice.

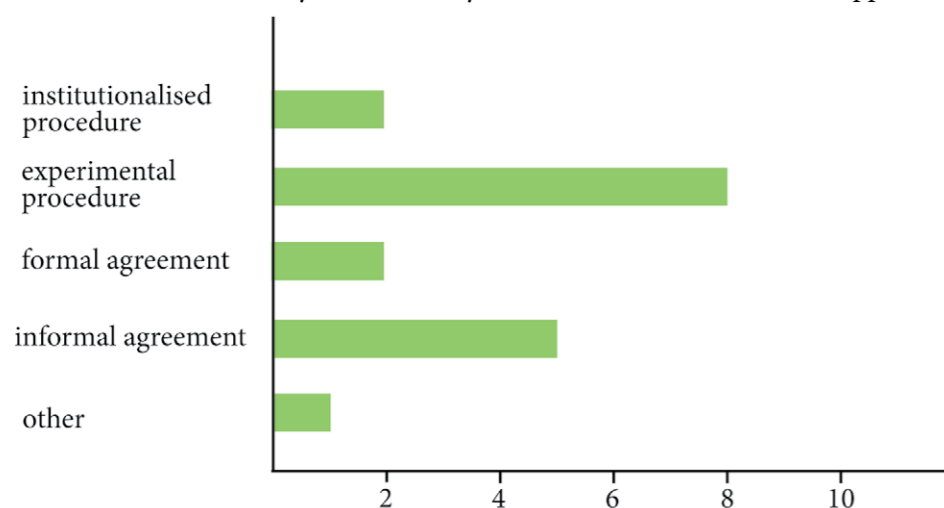
In some cases experience shows us that European projects, with their quite strict requirements, are cleverly used by transformation agencies as Troy horses to introduce seminal innovations in static, custom-burdened environments.

No surprise then, about the fact that also CAPACities was able to produce such a large opportunity for innovation – which, it must be admitted, in many cases would not be absolute innovation, rather relative innovation: with this meaning the introduction of something that had already been successfully developed elsewhere in a new environment, or its application to a new issue.

What it is impossible to assess at the moment is whether such experimentations will last as the European project itself, or will be able to grow roots and produce further results in the future. The hope lays in the fact that most of the tools have been experimented in complex social environments including a wide spectrum of stakeholders, whose interests should not be dismissed in the future, and that they were applied to issues relevant at the local level (as opposed to imposed top-down because of abstract political preferences).

Obviously such hope has larger prospects of permanent transformation of a given context in those cases an agreement could be established during the implementation process.

This is the case of NTA's tool no. 1 and CAUE84's no. 7 (which were born as informal agreements from the start), LAMORO's no. 3 and AMGI's no. 12 (born as formal agreements; the latter aims explicitly at guiding all subsequent decisions), GR's no. 8 (covered by an formal agreement between different-level institutions in spite of its experimental character), RP's no. 5 and 6 (whose outcome was the establishment of informal agreements between involved actors), and RL's no. 10 (whose products were the result of an informal task committee whose members were the mayors). Similarly in the case of LI's tool no. 9 application to



[Fig. 5 - Tools according to formal structure]

Baden and Bad Vöslau, the result won't be binding, but will become attachments to the Local Development Plan and the Building Regulations.

Some partners, such as AMGI, have observed that problems may arise in case of local leadership changes. A wide agreement involving not only counsellors or political parties but the civil society at large will much help in maintaining the direction in such cases. This is much more true in those cases, as in RL's Verbano valleys, where administrative divisions and institutional changes are just too recent to predict what use will be made of the research output.

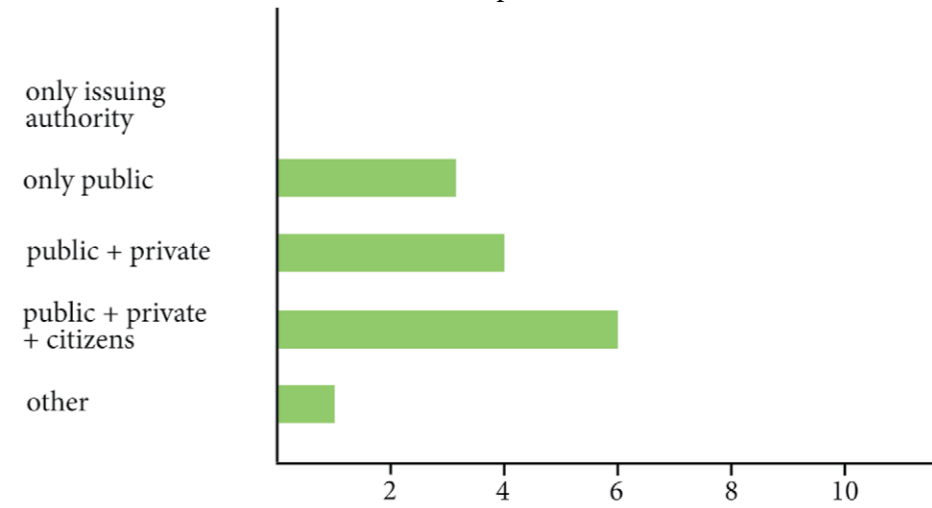
To complete this analysis based on statistical data, we just need to add that the involvement of different actors shows a clear tendency towards multiplicity and diversity (see figure 6).

No-one of the tools is thought as an internal instrumentation for the issuing authority. 3 out of 13 (all from Regione Lombardia) are designed for involving a number of public bodies; 4 include also private stakeholders; and further 6 also citizens. In one case (CAUE84's tool no. 6), participation extends also to single enterprises.

Far from being a sign of weakness from the institutional side, the tendency towards a participatory approach that can be recognised in the latter 10 tools marks a strong on-going inclination towards inclusion and partnership at all societal levels, which builds consensus and shares responsibility and commitment in view of a more deeply rooted (and hence sustainable) development perspective.

Only assuming such a political stance may public policies build future for present and forthcoming generations (Bobbio, 2004; Wates, 2000). That is much more true in marginal territories where the more or less strong local powers just fade in front of upper level phenomena - from globalised economy to national policies, to name but a few - and should therefore find common ground on which to build their development strategies.

From this point of view, it seems that those tools that were designed for exclusively public partnerships might be quite easily rearranged in order to extend participation and hence build wider consensus and mobilise a diverse spectrum of social and economic resources.



[Fig. 6 - Tools according to partnership involved]

On the basis of collected information it seems that a classification of tools might better have been as follows:

- tools to support the analysis of local resources (tangible and intangible);
- tools aimed at supporting the production of development strategies (shared, participatory, etc.) built on the above-mentioned local resources;
- guidelines and recommendations;
- management methods and schemes;
- assessment systems.

This shows once again that a predefined classification grid may not fit perfectly the reality it was supposed to describe, and that after data have been gathered and discussed a feedback might come on the grid themselves.

A final remark should be dedicated to highlighting the most relevant findings that are common, albeit not unanimously present, in CAPACities partners' contributions.

1. There is a clear and strong link between the quality of the built and natural environment on one side, and the quality of life, including the 'health' of the local socioeconomic system at large, on the other.

Obviously, this does not mean by any means that there should be recognised some sort of determinism here. Nevertheless, the Alpine environment seems to perfectly epitomise a condition where the physical and the socioeconomic facets - if such a tremendous simplification is acceptable at all - find themselves in balance, also in the ecological sense (see Crescimanno, 2010, for a more detailed analysis).

To put it in terms of opportunities rather than of plain description of what's there, in an evermore competitive scenario it seems that Alpine areas - or, at least, those that are well-connected to transportation and information infrastructure and reasonably provided with urban functions - are particularly well positioned against their metropolitan and flatland counterparts, thanks both to their natural capital resources (such as setting, landscape, healthy environment, etc.) and availability of specific resources that may have an intrinsic economic value (see for instance, CAUE84's strategy for the use of endemic plant species in advanced industries; or RP's scheme for a careful use of local energy and building resources). Analysis tools are therefore crucial in both clearly identifying local resources in quantitative and qualitative terms (including social values attached to them, and their *Zukunftsfähigkeit* or 'capacity to contain the future'), and positioning them against a broader context of general unsustainability of the urban-industrial 'development model'. Mountain areas might result among the few places in the continent that are not too much detached from a really sustainable development model; they should become aware and able to take advantage of this (Mercalli, 2002).

A number of partners felt first of all the need to implement ways to make local assets visible and build awareness of unexploited potential. What might seem obvious from the outside - for instance, the evident healthier living conditions or stronger eco-systemic resilience - may not be fully recognised locally, where marginality in service provision, job opportunities, or urban functions can outbalance strengths in the residents' perception.

2. As we've already mentioned, tools show a quite strong tendency towards cross-sectoral policies and inter-municipal cooperation.

The acknowledgement of a multidimensional, integrated approach is quite obvious today, once 'modernist' certainties have been set apart - be it by choice or necessity (Bauman, 1991; Bauman, 1992; Bauman, 1993). Often, the relevance of human capital and the cultural dimension of local development are mentioned in project dossiers and presentation material but play a small (if any) role in actual policies that tend to focus on infrastructure or other physical transformation. Really integrated development policies call for going beyond the jurisdiction limits of different offices within a certain public administration, or different public bodies whose powers somewhat overlap.

This said, one needs to go beyond the formulation of intentions and see if appropriate tools are available to support cross-sectoral policies, and if and how all local actors accept to share a part of their power in order to allow for a really integrated production of visions (which is perhaps easier) and concrete implementation and day-to-day management (which is by far more arduous).

Not only the initial project or strategy should be plural - it should be able to stay open during its life in order to accept actual participation and diversity, without which 'multi-', 'cross-', and 'inter-' approaches are destined, at best, to support a certain degree of co-ordination between complicated administrative divisions and functional repartitions, in order to increase efficiency. Those experimental solutions which - even though through 'weak' agreement forms - not only accept but promote as an opportunity a certain degree of plurality in points-of-view, goals, instrumentation, implementation techniques, and, what's more, decision-making processes, are those that appear best suited to put AS-SLUCs in a strong position in competing with other territories and attracting opportunities for the benefit of their populations.

3. Social inclusion is just the most advanced consequence of adapting a participatory approach.

All those forms of consultation that have been used by most partners - IUG, RAVDA, RL, RP, GR, LI to mention just those that have given it a heavier role - should be made permanent and not only be used instrumentally to produce documents giving voice to plural stances.

This does not imply by any means that traditional forms of representative democracy should be overcome - but they should more permanently be integrated with broader empowerment of local communities.

Let us not forget that one of the traditional features of mountain community was often a large degree of self-determination, which has resisted till now only in Switzerland. By definition, a sustainable system is one that is primarily based on local resources, and the first such resources are the citizens themselves, members of a community that is able and willing to take responsibility about its own future. Whatever the legal framework, it is strongly recommended that where municipalities are small (in terms of population) they:

- a) increase the functional relationship between one another and with superordinate administrative bodies, with the aim of uniting the scarce resources available; and
- b) mobilise living forces in the civil society in a common effort towards an amelioration of local opportunities for present and future generations.

4. Finally, innovation in entrepreneurship and public-utility service provision is another very relevant point, which unfortunately has not been developed by partners as it should.

True, local integrated systems have been put at the centre of many partners' Pilot Projects: only think to CAUE84's revitalisation of mountain economies through the provision of co-ordinated, well-serviced facilities; RL's training activities connected in a 'cultural district' in valle Seriana; RP's effort of establishing an integrated cycle of production and transformation of wood into energy and material for the building and furniture industries in val Varaita; RAVDA's cross-generational integration of skills in crafts and tourism industries in Walser Mountain Community; and – possibly the examples that more clearly give an essential role to small and micro enterprises – LAMORO's attribution of a key role to women and their businesses in marginal mountain areas in the province of Cuneo; and LI's integrated plan for facilities and services provision in Baden and Bad Vöslau.

Nevertheless, not much has been elaborated in order to recognise the essential role played in mountain areas by small and micro enterprises, and assess their actually overwhelming role in contributing to the health of local economies and societies at large; and still less in order to arm them against the merciless competition from external economic forces, that are not only intrinsically more powerful (being much bigger), but also strongly backed by national and European regulations, and enjoying a much easier access to both credit and subventions.

Monitoring and assessing schemes should become unbiased and refrain from associating large dimensions, investment capacity, and 'modern' organisational forms with 'good' and 'well-performing' enterprises. In fact, the present economic situation shows that often in times of crisis, small and micro enterprises can better survive and hence perform an unparalleled role of social resilience.

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5.5 tools

Tool no. 1: Innovative Monitoring	
Proposed by	NTA
Topic	Sustainable tourism
Type of tool	Analytical tool Attractiveness and Competitiveness Monitor
Territorial scale	Region; Inter-municipal; Other (Slovenian Julian Alps)
Legal framework	Informal agreement
Actors involved	Public institutions, private stakeholders and citizens

Main goals

The main logic behind the Alpine Competitiveness Monitor is to propose a user-friendly and practical tool based on scientific inquiries and can therefore contribute to practical implementation of monitoring of the competitiveness, attractiveness and sustainability of Alpine Space at the level of Alpine municipality or tourist destination

Guiding principles

To achieve this the tool relies on most commonly proposed sustainability and competitiveness indicators that have been carefully selected out of the most influential models in order to best suit the characteristics of Alpine Space.

At a later stage these indicators were even empirically tested in nine municipalities of Slovenian Julian Alps and in the regions of Valle d'Aosta (IT) and Graubünden (CH).

Brief description

The users just need to input the basic data about a given municipality, as the system is able to calculate and graphically represent the indicators from the available data.

Once this is completed they can analyse the figures of the calculated indicator results in the results sector.

Further users can check the graphical representations of the outcomes in the charts and analyses section.

In case they experience any problems during the operation of the Benchmarking Monitor, there is a User manual, which provides guidance through all of the available features.

The Alpine Competitiveness Monitor allows the municipalities to be benchmarked in the following system:

- pilot municipality x : pilot municipality y;
- pilot municipality x : region to which appertains;
- region x : region y;

- pilot municipality x : average of all pilot municipalities (the barometer), both considering a single indicator and indicator groups.

In whole, the Alpine Competitiveness Monitor can be considered as an innovative tool that is:

- theoretically sound;
- practically applicable;
- simple;
- efficient;
- useful;
- able to represent the common vision of competitiveness in Alpine Space by the CAPACities project partnership.

Implementing example and references

The general version of CAPACities Alpine Competitiveness Monitor tool has been used for the first time in the phase of its testing in Slovenian Alps and two partner European regions (Valle d'Aosta in Italy and Graubünden in Switzerland).

In close cooperation with Alpine municipalities the basic data needed for the calculation of indicators have been gathered and input.

This way municipalities could start benchmarking themselves against each other and also see how they perform in terms of natural, social, environmental, and economic environment compared to regional averages.

NTA created a second, tourism-oriented version of the CAPACities Alpine Competitiveness Monitor, aimed at Alpine tourist destinations.

Through the series of discussions and presentations with local stakeholders NTA analyzed how past policies affected the Julian Alps destinations' competitiveness and sustainability and to find out how the tool could be used to analyse the trends and spotlight the right policies for innovative policy promotion that would lead to consequential rise of the competitiveness of the destinations tourist offer.

<http://etool.ntz-nta.si/login>

<http://etool.dojo.si>

Tool no. 2: Producing scenarios from student workshops

Proposed by	IUG
Topic	Participation / Public-private partnership
Type of tool	Analytical tool
Territorial scale	Inter-municipal
Legal framework	Experimental procedure
Actors involved	Various public and private institutions/stakeholders

Main goals

Organizing student workshops may be a means to inform the debate between public and private stakeholders, and shape an external vision of the future image of territory.

Spatial strategic planning is based upon the production of alternative scenarios.

The workshop is organized in two phases: the survey and the project.

The survey is addressed to collect statistical data and qualitative information through interviews with local decision makers and residents.

The project phase is addressed to produce different images of the future of the territory by creating sketches and schemes.

A confrontation is organized at the end of the workshop between students and local stakeholders.

Brief description

Until the end of the 1990s, strategic planning was opposed to spatial planning. Spatial strategic planning was theorised by researchers such as Patsy Healey, Bernardo Secchi or Paola Viganò.

It is an attempt to imagine spatial organisation schemes at large scales such as city regions or rural departments.

The scenarios are produced during workshops, which involve different categories of actors. A one-week workshop can produce a large set of territorial development images.

Implementing example and references

The charrettes of New Urbanists in America, such as John Fregonese (www.frego.com) or Peter Calthorpe (www.calthorpe.com).

Progetto Funo (www.provincia.bologna.it).

Tool no. 3: Methodology for a gender analysis in order to highlight the main difficulties in starting up feminine enterprises

Proposed by	LAMORO
Topic	Gender policies
Type of tool	Analytical tool Sectoral policy (Gender policies)
Territorial scale	Inter-municipal
Legal framework	Formal agreement
Actors involved	Public institutions, private stakeholders and citizens

Main goals

The main goal is to ameliorate the quality of life in mountain areas.

The development of services and facilities, through which women combine work and life, getting out of the isolation in which they are often relegated, are fundamental for the small urban context consolidation from the point of view of equal opportunities.

The most worrying risk for women who live in mountain areas is isolation.

Even the fragmented and inefficient Internet coverage may constitute a cause of discrimination patterns, and certainly narrows opportunities down and frustrates women's expectations.

Guiding principles

The aim is to build a methodology for the analysis of feminine entrepreneurship in mountain areas, by mixing quantitative and qualitative data and deepening the research through the selection of both positive and negative examples of women-run companies.

These examples are used for an in-depth analysis, that helps understand the causes of evolutionary dynamics in the feminine entrepreneurship of a certain area.

Brief description

The methodology proposed is structured in the following parts:

- creation of a database of women's enterprises on the territory;
- creation of a database of women's enterprises ceased in the last 5 years;
- creation of an evaluation index and an in-depth analysis of a portion (10%) of the total amount of enterprises;
- interviews to experts;
- selection of 10 female-owned businesses of particular interest and in-depth analysis of their features;
- selection of 5 female-owned businesses that ceased in the last years and in-depth

analysis of their history;

- elaboration of the collected data.

Implementing example and references

There is no example of implementation as this is the first time such a tool is developed.

Cuneo Province women contributed to its creation through several meetings where they discussed about their main difficulties and wishes.

They are strongly interested in carrying out activities and further developing the tool.

Tool no. 4: Training initiatives as an engine for local development

Proposed by	RL
Topic	Economic valorisation of local resources
Type of tool	Analytical tool Refresher course in the field of territorial development planning
Territorial scale	Region; Municipal
Legal framework	Experimental procedure
Actors involved	Various public institutions

Main goals

The main goals of this innovative training method are:

- the building of a new awareness of local government counsellors and officers about the local resources and weaknesses; and
- the emerging of both action fields and tools more adapted to the specific local development needs.

Guiding principles

Staff and counsellors from local public bodies take part in the course. A training activity team just supports the participants in recognising the main issues for the sustainable development of the territory, and in achieving consensus on a local agenda.

The cultural dimension of local development and the central importance of human capital for the improvement of local action are the main references of the training experiences.

Brief description

Before the course, a “territorial mediation” expert collects the perceptions of the local community visiting the place, listening to the population, and holding some interviews.

At the beginning of the course the participants, divided in groups, reflect on community perceptions, and highlight the main factors influencing local development. After some discussion steps, a few main issues are identified.

About two weeks later, the participants meet experts specifically involved on the basis of the issues previously acknowledged. Following a bottom-up approach, the territory itself selects the discussion items and the experts are asked to highlight opportunities and tools for the development of that specific district.

A final activity can be implemented in order to produce a final document or, when possible, an Agenda, where some concrete steps for future activities are underlined.

Implementing example and references

The course was organised with the technical support of the Seriana Valley Mountain Community. Regione Lombardia designed the activities and program with the help of a hired consultant and a course team.

A week before starting, the expert made a survey in Seriana Valley. A list of faithfully reported quotes from such survey have been selected and then proposed to the participants during the first stage of the course.

Ten days later, the participants got together with officials from the Regione Lombardia, who had been specifically involved on the basis of the issues that emerged during the first meeting: interregional cooperation, tourism and commerce, and mountain agriculture.

During the second part of the final day, the expert proposed a reflection on “Identity and mentality at the local level”. After this a discussion was developed in order to produce the contents of a local Agenda.

The course team and the expert have then drawn up the Agenda and proposed it to the local institutions for approval.

Tool no. 5: Renewable energy guidelines

Proposed by	RP
Topic	Renewable energy production and consumption
Type of tool	Analytical tool; Policy tool Cross-sectoral policy
Territorial scale	Regional; Inter-municipal; Municipal
Legal framework	Experimental procedure; Informal agreement
Actors involved	Public institutions, private stakeholders and citizens

Main goals

Support decision-making towards a sustainable management of mountain territories. The main goal should be the reduction of the ecological impact produced by human activities (production and transformation processes, household management, transportation...).

The use of local resources (building materials, local energy resources) is a key point for a sustainable development, and can support a new mountain economy based on short distance supply chains.

Mountain communities are often exporters of renewable energy (in the form of wood and/or hydropower). The local energy patterns should be rethought over, so to satisfy sustainably the local demand without decreasing one of the few sources of income they can dispose of, and drastically reducing the need to import fuel for heating purposes.

Another relevant goal is to guide those who live now and will live in the mountains towards a different lifestyle, based as much as possible on local resources.

Guiding principles

In the present crisis of the urban-industrial development model – not a transitional event, but one that will lead to relevant economic and ecologic changes – the mountain areas may offer both tangible and intangible resources.

Local communities should become aware of such potential and develop a strategy to exploit it sustainably and efficiently.

The awareness that our present model is not sustainable both economically and environmentally should push the people and the local stakeholders to adopt a less energy-consuming lifestyle.

Brief description

The guidelines tackle a number of issues:

1) Reduce energy consumption:

– for transportation: decrease the use of car for commuting, use public transportation or

live close to workplaces;

- for construction: use building products with low embodied energy (priority should be given to local materials e.g. wood or stone produced and transformed locally, keeping in mind that the heavier the material, the bigger its ecological footprint for transportation); choose durable materials: the embodied energy will be amortised during the long building life;
 - for buildings use: this point should be accorded maximum priority.
- 2) Reduce residential heating volumes (for example plan covered spaces where activities can take place), reduce the envelope thermal losses adding insulation layers, introduce passive systems (e.g. greenhouses), install new heating systems that burn renewable fuels.
- 3) Use local renewable energy sources to heat water and produce electricity: sun (photovoltaic and thermal solar panels), biomass from wood (possibly in cogeneration boilers), wind, water. Every source should be used according to its local potential and minimising its impact on the environment.
- 4) An integrated public energy management is needed to cover the initial investment to build a local energy system - profits will then be available to fund community projects.
- 5) A public information service providing also counselling and energy assessment of existing buildings might be very useful too.

Implementing example and references

About transportation:

- Serge Salat. The efficiency of territorial urban morphology and human behaviour are as relevant as the building efficiency on the global environmental impact. urbanmorphologylab.com.

About buildings:

- EVA Lanxmeer, a Dutch almost self-sufficient neighbourhood in Culemborg (Utrecht), provides examples of application of greenhouses added on the north and south facades. www.eva-lanxmeer.nl;
- Bengt Warne: Houses built inside greenhouses. <http://bengtwarne.malwa.nu>; www.ecorelief.se;
- Werner Schmidt. Houses with thick strawbale walls, with a very low energy consumption. <http://www.atelierwernerschmidt.ch>;
- Andreas Ruedi: Houses whose solar gains are larger than thermal losses. <http://www.a-ruedi.ch>.

About integrated local management:

- Azienda Naturale Comunale (“Communal Natural Company”) is being founded by the Municipality of Sampeyre (CN) and by Cerigefas (Università degli Studi di Torino). <http://www.vallevaraita.cn.it/ita/cerigefas>; <http://www.comune.sampeyre.cn.it/>

Tool no. 6: Villages revitalisation guidelines

Proposed by	RP
Topic	Revitalisation of historic centres, Sustainable development
Type of tool	Analytical tool, Policy tool Spatial plan; Cross-sectoral policy
Territorial scale	Province/Department; Municipal
Legal framework	Experimental procedure; Informal agreement
Actors involved	Public institutions, private stakeholders and citizens

Main goals

The guidelines define a strategy on how to deal with abandoned mountain villages: how to allow new residents and activities settle, in places where now there are only holiday houses. Particular concern is given to how to rescue the buildings, respecting their appearance, and building techniques, the culture they represent, and the agricultural landscape they stand in.

Being their number absolutely non-negligible, such effort will contribute to stop urbanization processes and agricultural soil consumption.

Guiding principles

In the Alps thousands of settlements, heritage of a different socio-economic and ecological system, are almost abandoned.

Only some houses have been converted into holiday homes.

Besides their cultural value as evidence of past know-how in tune with nature, mountain villages can represent high-quality environments to live today – much better than the commodified ‘urban sprawl’ – and sometimes at a very reasonable distance from urban centres.

Moreover, mountain settlements are imbued with clear principles that can become again useful when trying to move away from the actual development model.

A lower-impact development model should take in great consideration the environment and the local context, without reducing the actual quality of life level.

Brief description

The local community is responsible in face of the establishment of a solid agreement about the preservation of the villages and a new shared identity. This needs to be rebuilt making profit of traditional culture, but should embed present living values. Actions to promote social awareness are needed to gain cultural and administrative autonomy.

An inter-municipal commission gathering all relevant institutions should be created (one-

stop procedure) for historical settlements.

One of the leading suggestions is to provide (free, public) services instead of subsidies: supply an effective organization to manage the building process; develop information and training activities; give counselling, also showing best practices; etc.

Information and plans regarding entire villages should be provided by public bodies as a result of participatory designs, especially regarding access roads and parking lots, anti-seismic load-bearing structures, public spaces and communal facilities, energy systems, and in general issues that cannot properly be managed at the level of individual estates.

The lifestyle should be adapted to the buildings at least as much as the buildings are modified to meet contemporary, sometimes abstract requirements. The use of local materials and labour-intensive (traditional or innovative) techniques should be promoted both to sustain the local labour market and for environmental reasons. Energy, water, food, and waste should be managed as locally as sustainably efficient. The rehabilitation of mountain villages shouldn't be considered as restoration work – they must be respected, but are not monuments. Durability, energy efficiency, comfort should rank among the highest-prized requirements. In any case, suggested 'appropriate' technical solutions cannot control the quality of refurbishment.

Detailed on-site surveys are the starting point for any project and should be compulsory.

Design must be custom-made – transferring standard solutions is at best dangerous. This tendency is the result of seeing the professional as a dispenser of bureaucratic papers, and of laws and by-laws tending to impose industrialised ways of doing born in totally different contexts. Therefore, a high degree of awareness and technical competence is called for from all the actors in the building trade.

In the end, the guidelines provide with a few principles to sustain and design respectful, functional, and affordable rehabilitation.

Implementing example and references

Revitalisation of whole villages:

- Bordo (www.bordo.it) and Torri Superiore (www.torri-superiore.org) are examples of collective self-building work that last for a long time. The works are characterized by acceptance of existing traditional buildings and minimal changes;
- Paraloup and Colletta di Castelbianco (www.colletta.it) are examples of intervention by a single actor: in the first case a trust, in the second a developer.

About the principle of distinction between new and old (an addition to a building is a contemporary work of architecture, standing out from the ancient one), good practices are works by:

- Werner Schmidt (www.atelierwernerschmidt.ch);
- Naumannnaumann architects (www.promolegno.com/materialelegno/01/progetti/la-casa-nella-casa.htm);
- Daniele Marques (www.marques.ch);
- Michele Arnaboldi (www.ma-a.ch).

Tool no. 7: Plan for specific economic estates

Proposed by	CAUE84
Topic	Economic valorisation of local resources
Type of tool	Analytical tool; Policy tool Sectoral policy (economic development)
Territorial scale	Inter-municipal
Legal framework	Informal agreement
Actors involved	Various public and private institutions/stakeholders; Enterprises

Main goals

The main objectives of the tool are:

- to reduce territorial unbalance between competitive, industrialised areas, and depopulated mountain areas;
- to identify some specific emerging activities, with the aim to strengthen and develop them, and so to contribute to their competitiveness;
- to define a strategy for economic renewal, giving prospects to specific activities (in the case of Pays Une Autre Provence cosmetic, healthy food, distilling with nuclear technologies...) by research and development, in order to create value-added employment.

Guiding principles

The Plan is set up to answer two main questions:

- which are the organisational methods and means of the industries that are active in the area?
- how to intervene on the industries' organisation, to strengthen the local development dynamics?

The key issue is to reveal the valorisation potential of local resources, and their development opportunities, with an approach based on spatial planning, but also on organisational optimization.

Therefore, the Plan is based on an analysis of location, and of development prospects of traditional and emerging industries, with the aim to arouse synergies between enterprises.

Brief description

A specific methodology based on data bases analysis, enquiries, and interviews is set up, following to the objectives of the Plan:

- definition of the area targeted for this policy. It is elected for being a disadvantaged area as long as economic development is concerned (according to the findings of a

SWOT analysis). This justifies the institution of specific public measures. In the case of Pays Une Autre Provence, such “priority area” corresponds to the mountain area and its surroundings;

- analysis of Status indicators: characteristics of existing trading estates (location, infrastructure level, built surface, total surface), data on potential growth of trading estates (urban planning regulations, land available for future estates, price of land, responsible authority or manager, evolution of jobs, predominant activity sectors, development prospects...), characteristics of significant enterprises (activity sector, size, evolution of jobs, turnover, development prospects...);
- analysis of the economic structure of different sectors (both traditional and emerging activities), based on local resources: clustering;
- drawing of recommendations to strengthen local resources exploitation, emerging activities and their clusters, spatial management, and development planning.

Implementing example and references

In the mountain area of Pays Une Autre Provence, a large part of the economy is still based on traditional agriculture, e.g. aromatic plants growing (lavender...). This activity is very vulnerable, due to the competition of countries where labour is very cheap.

Nevertheless, at present plant growing could take off again with good market prospects in the field of cosmetics and well-being industry.

According to the Plan for specific trading estates, the development of Pays Une Autre Provence will be based on synergies between different kinds of enterprises, local clusters, and geographical areas. For example, the Rhône Valley hosts an important nuclear industry, which has developed certain new technologies which can contribute to the progress of the distillery industry in the mountain area.

So, a platform dedicated to molecular extraction – gathering companies that implement innovative technologies such as supercritical carbon dioxide – is planned in Nyons area.

- Charter of Pays Une Autre Provence (2004) www.paysuneautreprovence.com
- Project and Local Action Group “Soil of taste” in Pays Une Autre Provence (programme LEADER, 2008)
- “Rural Excellence Cluster” on “Plant products valorisation and conversion” in Pays Une Autre Provence (DATAR, 2010) poles-excellence-rurale.datar.gouv.fr.

Tool no. 8: Revitalisation of historic centres

Proposed by	GR
Topic	Revitalisation of historic centres
Type of tool	Analytical tool; Policy tool Spatial plan; Cross-sectoral policy
Territorial scale	Region; Inter-municipal; Municipal
Legal framework	Institutionalised procedure; Experimental procedure
Actors involved	Various public and private institutions/stakeholders

Main goals

The main objectives are:

- to revitalise historic centres;
- to envisage sustainable solutions to make the centres more attractive;
- to raise financial resources inside and outside the region.

Guiding principles

In many mountain areas, peripheral urban centres happen to provide both local and at a certain extent regional functions (schools, basic healthcare, basic shopping facilities, basic services such as post office and banks, etc.).

The attractiveness and competitiveness of the towns that play such a role of small Alpine centres need to be upgraded through the search of appropriate solutions.

Brief description

Although the process must start out of an institutional decision, a private operator may be appointed with its coordination and management.

The first step is to analyse the current economic and social situation.

Then different development strategies are compared and assessed, setting relevant goals (e.g., for Poschiavo the goal was to market its historic centre to attract visitors, for Roveredo-Mesolcina to attract new residents).

Development strategies are subsequently be discussed in an experts workshop.

Finally, the development strategies are submitted to the municipalities involved. These can decide to approve them and implement the chosen strategies.

Implementing example and references

Poschiavo:

http://www.stw.ch/RNS_2_it.html

http://www.ilbernina.ch/article.php3?id_article=9217

Roveredo-Mesolcina:

<http://www.zukunftswohnen-netz.ch/index.php?page=0&cont=01>

http://www.wohnforum.arch.ethz.ch/publikationen/pub_buch_wohnen2lebenshaelfte.html

<http://www.neueswohnen50plus.ch/>

<http://www.wohnform50plus.ch/d/index.cfm>

Tool no. 9: Strategic planning and inter-municipal cooperation within the vicinity of metropolitan areas

Proposed by	LI
Topic	Strategic planning
Type of tool	Policy tool; Cross-sectoral policy
Territorial scale	Inter-municipal
Legal framework	Experimental procedure
Actors involved	Public institutions, private stakeholders and citizens

Main goals

The key goal is enhancing attractiveness and competitiveness of Alpine Space Small Urban Centres, focusing on the specific situation and requirements of those urban centres that lay within the vicinity of MEGAs.

This tool makes a contribution to the following issues:

- development and implementation of inter-municipal cooperation processes in line with local policies, planning activities and actions;
- identification of cooperation fields duly considering sustainability and cost efficiency;
- optimisation of local resources use, shared and complementary strengths and opportunities;
- continuous pursuit of medium and long term development goals while ensuring flexibility throughout the implementation process.

Guiding principles

The objective is to contribute to the identification of potential fields of inter-communal cooperation, which will be requested by tightening budgets, rising requirements for small and medium-sized towns, and spatial complexity.

What is crucial in terms of broad applicability of this tool is the customised usage in line with the specific local situation.

Thus it is advised to adapt the SWOT analysis methodology based on general indicators, integrating specific (locally relevant) indicators.

The tool is open towards a diversity of organisation, cooperation, and participation forms.

Brief description

“Traditional” inter-municipal partnerships are primarily established to share or co-ordinate public tasks and services such as technical infrastructure, administrative services, etc.

The innovative approach of this instrument lays in the extension of the field to include

integrated spatial planning processes as well as development strategies, featuring the following work phases:

- SWOT analysis based on general and local indicators for every AS-SLUC;
- definition of common strengths and weaknesses as well as complementary resources and deficits of the AS-SLUCs;
- identification of cooperation fields and shared strategy formulation by network partners (public and private stakeholders, public administration, external experts, but also, e.g., special interest groups and citizens);
- establishment of a modular strategy concept, considering different scenarios and sets of measures (action alternatives).

Implementing example and references

This instrument with its individual working steps was specified in the Pilot Project involving the Cities of Baden and Bad Vöslau, and there tested within the quite limited timeframe of CAPACities.

In order to improve its practicability and take local specific features into account interviews with local public and private decision makers were conducted in addition to the SWOT analysis.

The modular strategy plan was tested addressing the issue “Housing and Work”, in particular regarding small and micro-enterprises, other issues may follow.

Implementation was initiated by means of an informal loose network to be continued and intensified in the future.

As successfully performed upon completion of the project “Culturalp”, further project implementation shall be supported by the project partner in its function as counseling planner.

Evaluation steps are to be added.

Though it is not foreseen that the strategy concept will attain a legally binding character, findings may become part of the legal tools of the Local Development Program and the Building Regulation Plan.

Links:

www.capacities-alpinespace.eu

www.liske.at

Tool no. 10: Environment and heritage recovery – Place making

Proposed by	RL
Topic	Local planning processes
Type of tool	Policy tool Spatial plan; Cross-sectoral policy
Territorial scale	Inter-municipal; Municipal
Legal framework	Experimental procedure; Informal agreement
Actors involved	Various public institutions

Main goals

The recognition of shared responsibilities in managing an area involves the need of an innovative approach for planning and growth management at the municipal level. This implies encouraging and implementing inter-municipal cooperation measures.

The tool aims at improving the policy makers’ consciousness of shared spatial assets such as those resources with a unique, distinctive character that can increase competitiveness and attractiveness.

The tool is also useful to improve the functional relationship between different planning levels and competences (Regional spatial plan, local urban plans), in order to increase efficiency in space management.

Guiding principles

The organisational structure is very simple: it leads the municipal governments to work cooperatively, considering the sum (in our Pilot Project, the Chiavenna Plain) as a whole, and not only the single municipal territories.

Brief description

The work structure is the following:

- preliminary study of the characteristics of the shared area and its context, and meetings with the mayor who will act as local project leader, to discuss characteristics and problems of the target area;
- study on the features of the common area, and conception of a shared project on it involving local stakeholders;
- building a network containing all mayors (a sort of area committee), and organisation of meetings to agree on a common project and a work plan;
- implementation of shared planning, and meetings to discuss the work in progress;
- completion of the plan;
- public presentation of the plan.

Implementing example and references

The implementation of the tool in Chiavenna Valley included the following steps:

1. Creation of a Guidebook, the first about the whole Chiavenna Plain (only guidebooks dealing with single municipalities in the plain existed before). The main goal of the guide is to collect experiences (past, present, or future projects) which can be related to competitiveness and attractiveness issues. The Guidebook will be available in local bookstores, libraries, and tourist offices. The Guidebook will push municipalities to look at the plain as a whole area, with its peculiarities and treasures, and not as a land fragmented by administrative divisions. Lastly, the Guidebook will contribute to connect the local potential to planning decisions, taken at different scales (e.g.: regional plans, local urban plans).
2. Workshops involving mayors who worked together on a draft of the Guidebook.
3. Meetings with mayors aiming at building a committee on the Plain, which could proceed working when CAPACities Project is over.

Tool no. 11: Innovating and integrating community services for urban and environmental quality

Proposed by	RL
Topic	Local planning processes
Type of tool	Policy tool Sectoral policy (service provision)
Territorial scale	Region; Inter-municipal; Mountain Community
Legal framework	Study
Actors involved	Various public institutions

Main goals

The tool aims at providing an informative instrument to improve the provision of local interest services, by defining the more efficient size of municipalities. There is in fact a chance that inter-municipal bodies may turn into coordinating agencies capable of assisting small municipalities, and staging new projects of joint service provision. From this point of view it is strategic to provide technical support to decision makers and representatives of inter-municipal bodies in their efforts towards organising their offices, offering some new perspectives and a proper information basis.

Guiding principles

Different demands (from citizens, social groups, business sectors, commuters, and tourists) overlap and compete over Alpine areas. Such diversity challenges the current system of public service provision and calls for an integrated approach in order to achieve an economy of means, as well as a “rescaling” of services with respect to localities and the geographical distribution of citizen needs. In a way, rethinking service provision can be sought as an attempt to create a “shared infrastructure” for the manifold communities that use the analysed area.

Brief description

The tool consists in creating a workgroup composed by consultants and officers of the inter-municipal body. The workgroup produces a study on the area analysing potential synergies in service provision.

The outputs are then delivered to the counsellors of the inter-municipal body in order to help them instruct preliminary meetings with mayors of the affected municipalities.

The workflow of the project organization features four main activities:

- study of the administrative context and collection of data;
- delivery of a written report;

- two public meetings (a preliminary meeting and a final presentation of the study involving the local key policy makers);
- communication (printing and diffusion of the study).

Implementing example and references

The application of the tool to the CAPACities Pilot Project consisted in supporting counsellors and officers of the Mountain Community Valli del Verbano. Accordingly, the project team has been composed by a referee of the Mountain Community, and consultants from the CAPACities team (Regione Lombardia, Finlombarda and Politecnico of Milan). The project group has also exchanged information with another research group working on the same area.

The main output delivered by the project group to the Mountain Community was a handbook. It addressed the more peculiar needs of the Mountain Community, by providing a survey on the geographical distribution of community demands, a list of critical services that require reorganisation, and some basic considerations to reshape the responsibilities at a proper scale. The document contains also general guidelines and policy recommendations addressed to regional government officers.

Tool no. 12: Strategy for sustainable local development

Proposed by	AMGI
Topic	Sustainable development
Type of tool	Policy tool; Governance tool Cross-sectoral policy
Territorial scale	Municipal
Legal framework	Institutionalized procedure
Actors involved	Public institutions, private stakeholders, and citizens

Main goals

The main purpose of the strategy for local sustainable development is to harmonize the medium and long-term development goals and combine them into a uniform strategic framework that will take into account local resources, potentials, limitations, and desires to connect various needs of local stakeholders, thus defining a joint development direction. The strategy represents a common consensus, defines the key guidelines, and supports decision-makers in adopting decisions acceptable from the viewpoint of sustainable development.

Guiding principles

Because local elections usually take place every four years, municipalities find it difficult to consistently pursue joint development goals when there are changes in leadership, especially if these goals are not clearly defined and agreed among individual local stakeholders. A clear definition of goals is vital in order to effectively use the development resources and potentials and to successfully connect all the development players and their actions. Specifically, coordinated activity can contribute to creating synergic effects.

Brief description

The key moment for successfully implementing the strategy is the preparatory stage because it must include all areas of local community activities, evaluate local resources and potential, ensure inclusion of all involved in development, and produce a development vision that complies with all economic, social, and environmental standards.

This can only be achieved through a careful study of the local conditions and consistent implementation of the participatory process, in which all stakeholders become involved and identify with the strategy, its guidelines, and goals; this is also a necessary prerequisite for its successful implementation.

Goals defined in terms of number and timeline, responsible coordinators, and indicators for monitoring the implementation process must be defined for the harmonized guidelines.

This type of umbrella document is then adopted by the relevant municipal body, which consistently takes it into account in all further regulations and decisions, which prevent it from departing from the previously set strategic goals.

Implementing example and references

In Slovenia, local development strategies are uncommon; they are usually only adopted by large municipalities.

Nonetheless, it makes sense to systematically introduce them because the needs for these types of documents are manifested at every step.

This has also been experienced in the case of the Innovative Strategy for Sustainable Development of the Municipality of Idrija, in which the stakeholders were aware of the necessity for this type of strategy and participated with commitment in the majority of the preparatory activities.

Through this, cooperation between those involved already began at the preparation stage, which will be of key importance in implementing the strategy later on.

In terms of strategy preparation, our work in the pilot region is thus an example of effective development discussions.

The implementation of this type of strategies can be verified in several municipalities that have already adopted a similar document.

Tool no. 13: interactive workshops

Proposed by	RAVDA
Topic	Participation
Type of tool	Governance tool Strategic Planning
Territorial scale	Inter-municipal
Legal framework	Experimental procedure
Actors involved	Various public and private institutions/stakeholders

Main goals

An inter-municipal plan has to be set up on the basis of a participatory process involving public and private actors, whose interests are linked to the territory.

A shared vision of the future of their territory is the base of local development.

Interactive participation is the most efficiency means to connect and share development choices.

Building an interaction network between local stakeholders means therefore to be effective in terms of development choices.

Guiding principles

In the process of strategic planning, workshops are commonly organised in a quite conventional way.

Setting up an interactive workshop means, in addition, to identify the preferences of the participants, in order to work on those issues that are perceived as relevant.

Public and private stakeholders are involved on the basis of a “snowball” method, established by sociologists for reputational survey.

Brief description

For each topic, all actors that have interests on territorial planning and governance (“all-encompassing interest”) are involved.

Stakeholders are interviewed at their work place or any other neutral place, in order to acquire some preliminary knowledge of the preferences of each participant.

This facilitates further interaction and networking.

Moreover, stakeholders are asked to provide connections to other local stakeholders (“snowball” method).

A direct link, based on trust, is established with each stakeholder: the quality of the relationship is very relevant in letting participation grow.

After the interviews phase come(s) one or more workshop(s) that can be organized in different ways:

- workshop taking place in a meeting room: plenary session plus workshops about specific issues. Each participant chooses the thematic workshop they prefer, and on this basis work groups are organized;
- workshop “in situ” with *parcours commentés* (interactive discussion journeys). After the site visits, the thematic discussion is held in a meeting room.

At the end of the process, the stakeholders are in charge of settling the choices emerged during the workshop.

Implementing example and references

The model is participatory strategic planning as developed in Northern European towns, which has been implemented in a more complex way in metropolitan areas such as Torino. The Northern European tradition is based on the pre-existence of organised interests which are involved in the governance process.

We have used such a model, in the context of an Alpine valley, adding the participation of citizens, through individual interviews and group workshops.

The “snowball” method, which is also called reputational survey, has been first used by sociologists such as Hunter to understand the power networks in local societies.

Later, urban sociologists (laboratory CRESSON of the Architectural School of Grenoble) used this method to analyse social interactions.

The *parcours commentés* have been experimented in France by the multidisciplinary agency BazarUrbain, Grenoble (www.bazarurbain.com).

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