Alps 2050

Common spatial perspectives for the Alpine area.
Towards a common vision

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I. The Project
The project

Main objectives:

• A territorial vision and common spatial perspectives for the Alpine area until 2050.

• Effective solutions for a balanced sustainable development as well as help to strengthen informal and formal cooperation between actors

• Guidelines for the development of spatial perspectives and a spatial vision on the transnational level

• Spatial focus: Alpine region on the transnational level
The project

- **Stakeholders** develop the project idea and objectives: Leadpartner DE, partners from AT, CH, FR, IT, LI, SI and Alpine Convention
- The programme ESPON finances the project and coordinating the process
- **Research consortium:** Leadpartner DE, partners/subcontractors from AT, CH, FR, IT, SI
  - The programme ESPON finances the project and coordinating the process
- **Timing:** Nov 2017- Nov 2018
  - https://www.espon.eu/Alps2050
II. Territorial analyses
Economic Patterns

- The territorial analyses display very diverse patterns and sectoral complexity
  - On the left hand side, two maps with spatial patterns of a North-South divide: the trends in employment and in GDP (economic strength)
  - The map on tourism intensity based on overnight stays (upper right hand side) shows a ‘central-peripheral pattern’ showing the relative importance of the tourism economy in the inner Alpine areas
  - East-West gradient for the share of labour in the agricultural sector
Economic development

- High relevance of national differences in GDP level and development: NUTS3 regions of each country make up a kind of a ‘cloud’ that can immediately be differentiated from other countries.

- Belonging to a specific nation-state determines the economic level and path to a high extent.

- The data do not reveal a urban-rural antagonism: Metropolitan regions tend to perform with more positive values, but there are very successful rural regions, too.
Settlement system

- Within the mountainous areas the municipalities are *smaller* than beyond.
- Within the mountainous areas the map illustrates the importance of *valleys* for settlements.
- The map illustrates different *political/administrative contexts* (minimum size of municipalities in different countries).
The accessibility to different services of general interests – doctors, primary schools and train stations – shows similar spatial patterns.

There are lower values of accessibility for inner-Alpine than for the more urbanized and pre-Alpine areas – due to population density, transport infrastructure and investment schemes.
Demographic development

- Metropolises and the larger cities are almost always the centre of growth trends, i.e. trend of metropolisation.
- The patterns in rural areas are much more diverse.
- Large differences between the Alpine countries.
- The importance of valleys, corridors (Inn, High Rhine, Brenner etc.) is very visible.
Climate change

- The projected changes of the (air) temperature
  - higher increases in the inner-Alpine areas than in the area of the spaces beyond the mountain topography;
  - In particular, the South-Western side of the Alpine mountain range is characterized by the highest changes in annual mean temperature,
- Climate change adaption comprises measures concerning disaster risk management, touristic adaption strategies, new energy concepts etc.
Protected areas

- overview of the main existing protected areas
- clear differences between national protection regimes
- few cross-border formats
- ecological connectivity major concern: enduring sufficiently large functional ecological systems by – ideally – connecting in a way that flora and fauna can inter-exchange.
The concept reflects on the benefits that humans gain from the natural environment in daily life.

- built on functioning eco-systems like forest, grassland, or aquatic eco systems, and they are important in terms of drinking water or leisure supply.

- Map illustrates the drastic difference in the supply-and-demand-relation through the example of drinking water.
Governance (I)

- **institutional diversity** in the Alpine region, including EU and domestic instruments as well as cross-border programmes for many issues of regional policy and spatial development.

- **long-standing experience** in territorial cooperation, going back at least to the 1970s

- Importance of **instrumental ‘softness’**
Governance (II)

- The domestic scale differences of the involved countries with regard to:
  - country size
  - the share of the mountainous areas
  - the politico-administrative contexts (‘planning cultures’)
Territorial analyses – summary

- many positive trends (above average socio-economic performance in most of its parts, impressive diversity and density of territorial cooperation etc.)
- considerable challenges of spatial development – in particular
  - Lacking coherence, linkages and strategic orientation between its different types of territories
  - Considerable challenges of sustainable development
III. Perspectives, scenarios and a vision

Alps 2050
Scenarios and Perspectives

Future oriented approach based on

- **Trends from territorial evidence**
- **Participatory elements**, in particular Delphi study, expert workshop, steering group committee feedback loops
- **Technique of contrast scenarios**
Scenarios and Perspectives

- **Scenarios** express different general priorities and reflect the participatory input
- Technique of **contrast scenarios** highlights underlying political process
- **Perspectives** concretise the scenarios in a more sectoral manner
Scenarios and Perspectives

Scenario 1 – Status quo

- hitherto dominant trends will be carried forward, mainly based on domestic politics
- overall positive trend in economic development, but only limited success in achieving sustainable development, dispersed spatial trends
Scenarios and Perspectives

Scenario 1 – Status quo

Scenario 2 – Protected Alps

- Necessity to protect the inner-Alpine mountainous areas as a precious and vulnerable natural and cultural heritage – rather restrictive coordination of touristic demand, transport needs, settlement growth etc.

- ‘Metropolitan ring’ surrounding the Alps must not question sustainable development within the Alps
**Scenarios and Perspectives**

**Scenario 1 – Status quo**

**Scenario 2 – Protected Alps**

**Scenario 3 – Functional space**

- Necessity to improve linkages between the different subregions, i.e. between mountainous and pre-Alpine parts and across national boundaries
- Removing barriers and enhancing functional links (e.g. for labour markets, budget organisation, public services)
- Smart spatial development strategies overcome existing frictions with innovative political agreements and with adequate infrastructure investments
Scenarios and Perspectives

Scenario 1 – Status quo
Scenario 2 – Protected Alps
Scenario 3 – Functional space
Scenario 4 – European core

- position of the Alpine region in the centre of Europe causes the need for transit flows to ensure European economic prospering
- metropolitan ‘hubs’ and the major corridors as basis for successful spatial development
- attracting skilled labour force and entrepreneurial investments is as important as to ensure good transport and economic flows on the Alpine and European level
- **Status quo**: territorial frictions increase
- **Protected Alps**: limit growth dynamics in the inner-Alpine area, make pre-Alpine development more sustainable
- **Functional space**: mitigate border effects, allowing stronger functional linkages
- **European Core**: develop ‘hub qualities’, ensuring flows on a large scale
**Scenarios**

- **Status quo**: economic growth performance with strong metropolisation trends
- **Protected Alps**: green economy, post-growth approach and endogenous potential focus
- **Functional space**: balancing endogenous potential and competitiveness
- **European Core**: developing unique assets and overcome bottlenecks on a global scale
- **Status quo**: ongoing fragmentation and increased climate change issues
- **Protected Alps**: harmonised connectivity, climate adaptation priority
- **Functional space**: reorganisation of eco-system services, cross-border area management
- **European Core**: focus on unique landscape and eco-system services from a European perspective
From debate to development

- Economic policy
- Environmental policy
- Spatial development
- Transport policy

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Towards a common vision

The vision:

- A draft document as basis for further political concretisation
- Aiming at a common space on the transnational scale, comprising both mountainous and lowland parts that are based on a joint inter-related spatial organisation.
- Aiming at balanced spatial development based on sustainability, safeguarding a good quality of life and an efficient management approach of governance.
- Based on three layers – settlement system, linkages and territories
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Settlement system

- Developing a settlement system on the transnational scale, based on
  - **Metropolises**: hosting economic headquarter and innovation functions and large scale political decision-making, gateways for incoming professionals
  - **Regional hubs**: hosting important functions in economy and policy for the larger region, safeguarding a critical mass of high ranking R&D infrastructure, a complete offer of services of public interest and the potential for development without affecting rural spaces nearby (‘decentral centrality’),
  - **Local centres** with a high importance for rural spaces, in particular with regard to services of public interest and for economic incentives.
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**Linkages**

- Developing flows and functions across borders in a sustainable way

- **Backbone linkages**: The (inter-)regional axes further strengthen the existing transport and settlement systems, taking into account of the morphological structure - ensuring efficient spatial structures

- **TEN-T**: Many of the backbone linkages host the TEN-T infrastructure. It is important to implement the investment measures that were decided on the European and transnational level.
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Territories

- defining relations between urban and rural as well as between inner-Alpine and pre-Alpine spaces and across boundaries:
  - **(Urban) growth corridors**: Concentrating growth dynamics in order to avoid settlement sprawl and to achieve an efficient spatial organisation
  - **Mountain rural**: ensuring public services, supporting rural innovation systems, comprising technological, agricultural and touristic dynamics
  - **Lowland rural**: Developing endogenous potentials and developing fruitful linkages to the metropolises and other centres
  - **Natural heritage core areas**: Protecting, developing and connecting natural heritage, taking into account touristic potentials wherever reasonable (in the map based on existing UNESCO sites and national parks).
IV. Group discussions at the flip chart
Group discussions at the flip chart

Main insights
- Missing connection built commitments
- Stable situation (the same or better)
- Tourism: to implement necessary steps to position the Alps in the global economy
- Focus on transnational links with other international areas to consider tourism in Alps as a strong economic factor
- Hop, business development can be done through those regions (more than any others)
- Impacts on local economy
- What are the economic impacts on local economy? What are the challenges?

Implications
- Public transport needs to be improved more
- Climate change visions too enthusiastic
- What can we do improve? Each municipality
- Any improvements in public transport? How can we improve?
- We need some changes in cost of travel
- Concerns shown for wind energy investments
- How can this be improved? What is needed?
- 50% decrease under open platform

Main insights
- City axis (Berne/Aarberg)
- Drinking water (supply vs demand)
- Climate change, melting permafrost

Implications
- Urbanisation: more urbanisation
- Impact on local economies (flourish)
- Transport connections are important for small areas
- Distance to public service, changing with transport
- Sustainable private transportation
- Health public transport is not only harming habit
- Development
Group discussions at the flip chart

Main insights
- Climate change is ongoing concern (low and high impacts)
- Air is not easily predicted for centres, e.g., pollution and quality
- Water availability is an issue
- Urban sprawl and green spaces

Implications
- Local communities like to be involved
- More public transport
- More public participation
- More public spaces

Main insights
- Rising temperatures
- Climate change
- Need of changes in transport
- Territorial definition of the page of alpine identity beyond disruptions
- Bankruptcy / urban sprawl (speculative)

Implications
- Change of water levels
- Increase in emissions through automatic transport
- How level of implementation?
- Is it possible to develop something in society?

Main insights
- Not many changes in analysis
- More connection between regions necessary
- National belonging steep
- Nothing surprising in maps
- Most important issues: waste management
- Dreams are big: protected green zones

Implications
- More interrelations
- Connection and linkages between regions is most important (e.g., economy, transport, etc.)
- Green perspective improve not only environment but also economy (Tourism)
- Overcome dilemma between (economic) development and connection and environment issues/pollution
- Balance of interlinking regions and protection.
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