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Work Package 5:
Analysing the Influence of Cultural Differences on Regional Development in the Alps

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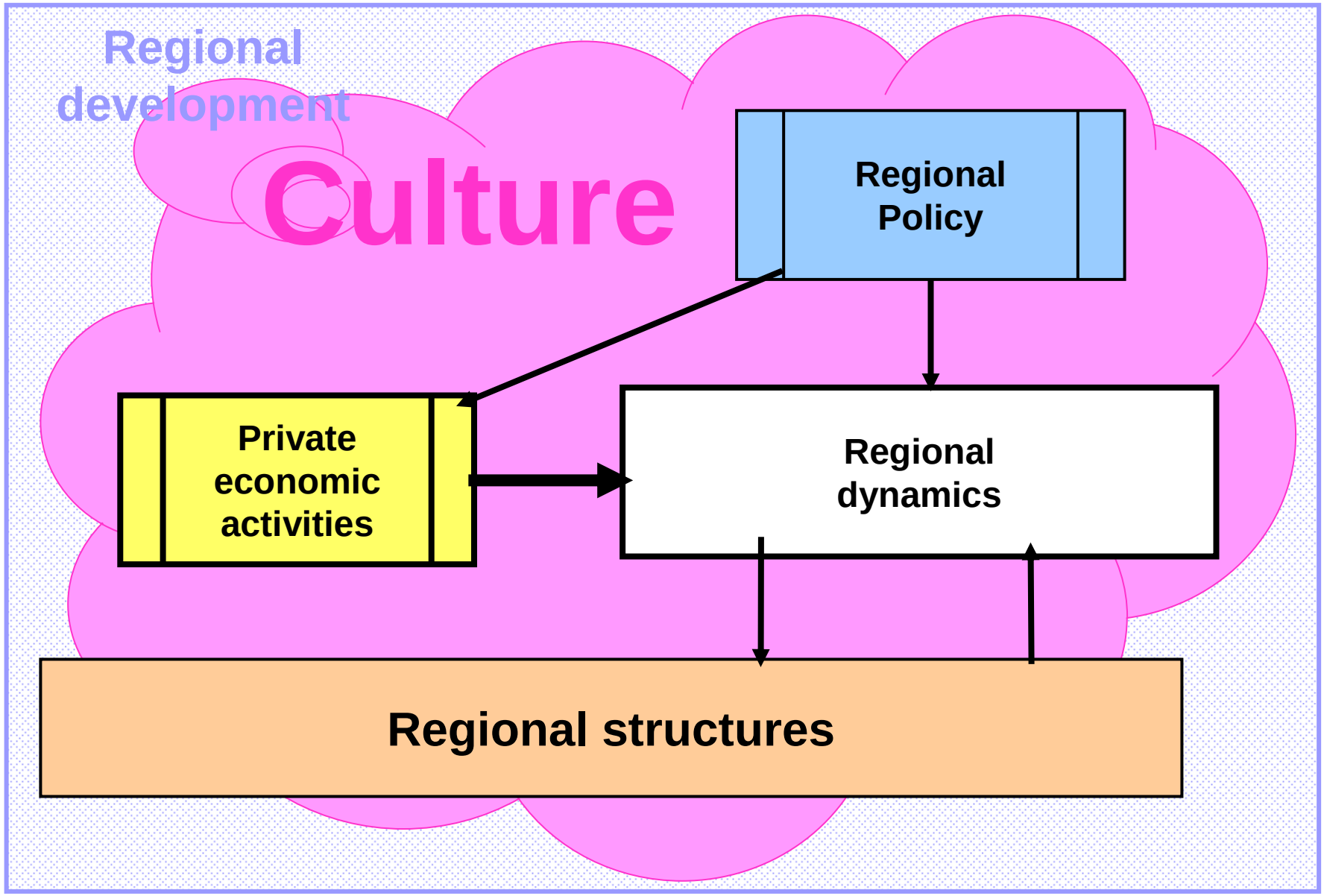
1. Methodological considerations
2. Enquiry & national reports
3. Results
4. Conclusions

Methodological considerations

- Culture?
  - region = language = culture?
  - structures & traditions?
  - values & attitudes?
    (how to handle differences)
- (Regional) development? regional change?
  - UNDP: HDI? EU: LSI?
  - economic indicators?
  - demographic indicators?
  - land use? ecological indicators?
- Sustainable regional development?
- Relations between Culture & Regional development?
- Differences among and/or within nations?


Regional development
Culture
Regional Policy
Private economic activities
Regional dynamics
Regional structures

1. Methodological considerations
2. Enquiry & national reports

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3. Results
   - Influence of formal cultural factors (Q VI)
   - Influence of specific values and attitudes (Q VII)
   - Strategic aspects of regional policy (Q II)
     - structures, tasks and objectives
     - main approaches and governance
     - relation between intra- and extra-alpine realm
     - trends and future orientation

The experts view:
Different approaches to regional policy in the Alps (Q I)

Approaches / Characteristics	**A**	**F**	**D**	**I**	**SLO**	**CH**
importance of "territorial geometry" (e.g. level of decentralization or urbanization), administrative structures		**X**		**X**	**X**	**X**
centralized vs. decentralized political and administrative structures, influence of the central state authorities, type of governance: top-down or bottom-up (F & I vs. D-A-CH)	**X**	**X**		**X**		
"Latin" approach (in F & I) vs. approach in D, A & CH				**X**		
perception of the Alps, meaning or importance of Alpine perspectives, in relation to the territorial structure ("*Alpenzentrismus*", "*Alpenmythos*")			**X**	**X**		
formalized planning procedures vs. case-to-case decisions (CH / A)	**X**					**X**
tremendous regional diversity, gradient between centres and periphery (I & SLO)				**X**	**X**	
importance of urbanization, neglecting the rural areas (SLO vs. CH & A)				**X**	**X**	

Fig. 2-1a: Different approaches to regional development

Characteristics	**A**	**F**	**D**	**I**	**SLO**	**CH**
Historical context	**X**		**X**			**X**
Political and administrative structures and traditions, type of governance: top-down or bottom-up (F & I vs. D-A-CH)	**X**		**X**	**X**		**X**
Size and shape of territory	**X**		**X**			
importance of "territorial morphology": portion of alpine areas (A & CH vs. I & F); perception of the Alps, meaning or importance of alpine perspectives, in relation to the territorial structure			**X**	**X**		**X**
convergence of problem perception and solving, cultural factors with only minor influence, diminished influence of internat. borders		**X**			**X**	
pragmatic vs. rigid administration (F & I / A & CH)			**X**			
cultural retardation of the Alps, mountain oriented mythology			**X**			

Fig. 2-1b: Cultural reasons of regional differences

Influence of cultural factors (Q VI)

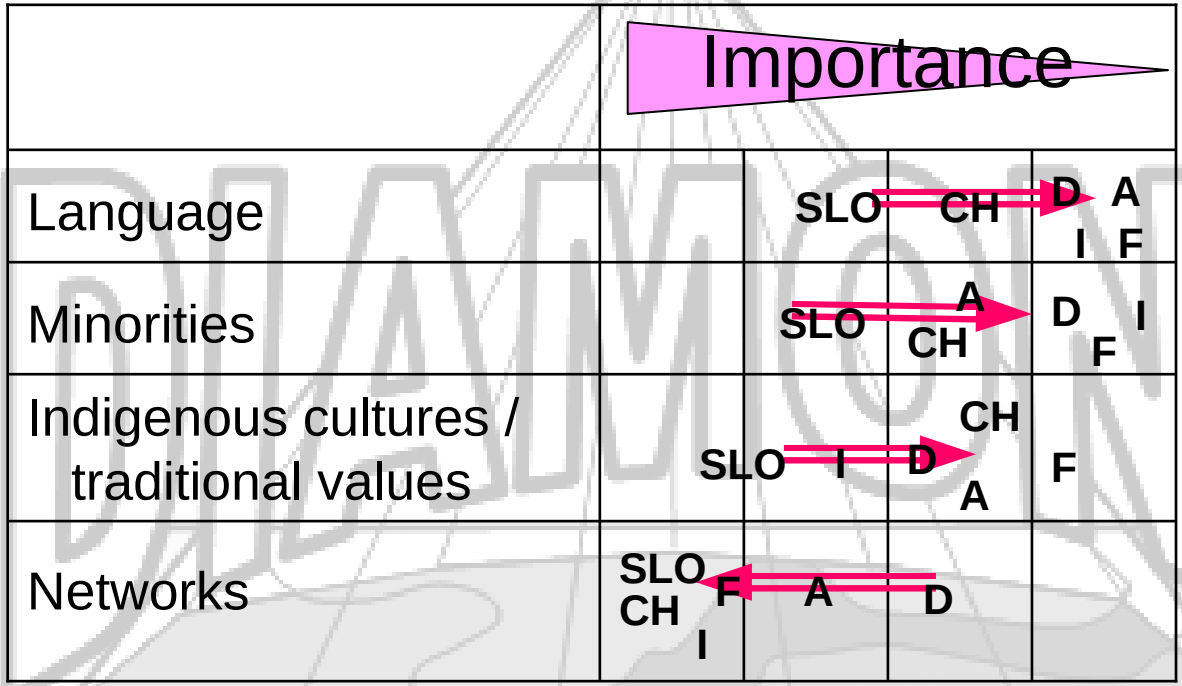

Fig. 2-2a: Importance of cultural factors I

Influence of cultural factors (Q VI)

	Importance			
cultural & natural heritage / regional identity		D A	I	
sustainable development	D ⇐			
marginalization / lack of interaction	I ⇐			
urbanization		F		
confidence to authorities		F		

Fig. 2-2b: Importance of cultural factors II

Influence of specific values and attitudes (Q VII)

	Importance			
Economic progress at large / extra-alpine growth	F A SLO D I CH			
Economic innovation / regional productivity	CH A F D I SLO			
Strengthening the regional economy	A CH D F SLO I			
cooperation with extra-alpine partners	F SLO I A D CH			

Fig. 2-3a: Importance of economic attitudes

Influence of specific values and attitudes (Q VII)

	Importance			
Ecological sustainability	SLO A D I CH F			
Cultural identity & social sustainability		SLO A I D CH F		
Minority rights			SLO A I F CH D	
Good education of local population	CH I A SLO D F			
Good public services for local population		I SLO D A F CH		

Fig. 2-3b: Importance of environmental & social attitudes

Strategic aspects of regional policy (Q II)

Strategic Approaches to Regional Policy	**A**	**F**	**D**	**I**	**SLO**	**CH**
Bottom-up (federalized or decentralized) implementation	**X**		**X**			**X**
Top-down (centralized) implementation		**X**	**(X)**	**X**	**X**	
Specific Alpine perspective	**X**		**X**			**X**
Alps perceived as marginal spaces		**X**	**X**	**X**		
Influence of EU policies & provisions	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**(X)**
Trend towards regional competences ➔ down from national level ➔ up from communal level	**X** **x**	**X** **x**	**X** **x**	**X** **x**	**X** **x** **x**	**X** **x**

Fig. 3-1a: Strategic approaches to Regional Policy

Objectives & trends of Regional Policy	**A**	**F**	**D *)**	**I**	**SLO**	**CH**
Diminishing disparities / Equal living conditions	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**
Stopping (slow down) out-migration		**X**		**(X)**	**X**	**X**
Strengthen urban centres for European/global competition	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**
Improving rural areas by providing infrastructure	**X**	**X**		**(X)**	**X**	**X**
Protection of nature / cultural landscapes / environment	**X**	**X**	**X**		**X**	**X**
Sustainable development / Economizing resources Keeping balance between development & protection		**X**	**X**		**X**	
Improving public-private partnerships Improving soft factors		**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**
Improving coordination, integrated planning & development	**X**				**X**	**X**

Fig. 3-1b: Objectives & trends of Regional Policy

Conclusions

Concluding, we remark that the traditional influences of most cultural factors on regional development are decreasing (while still intuitively present in our perception), leaving an open trail to a generalized development, which generates its peaks and shallows more from globally determined location qualities (like easy access and urbanization, i.e. along the village-metropolis gradient) than from local or regional culture, which in itself tends to become more uniform. Traditional cultural differences then are more an expression of time lags and bound to diminish on the long run.

Conclusions (cntd.)

This in turn is a clear signal to DIAMONT: For monitoring regional development in the Alpine Convention context we must not spend to much efforts on indicators based on traditional cultural differences, but more on indicators measuring sustainable progress in a globalizing world, based on attitudes and values.

However, this may well include information on regional identity, provided it means not a mere leftover from times past or folklore, but a conscious profile and strategy to future challenges.