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Data Infrastructure for the Alps: Mountain Orientated Network Technology

Key issues of regional development: DIAMONT WP6 experience

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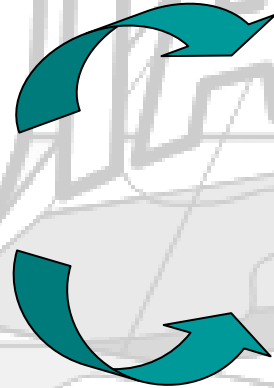


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WP6 objectives

DIAMONT: provide with a basis for monitoring the sustainability of regional development in the Alps

two
preparatory
works



WP5: enhance the understanding of the **influence of cultural differences** on regional development in the context of a sustainable future in the Alps

WP6: identify the **key issues of the development** in the Alpine regions referring to the present and future problems, challenges and even chances



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WP6 approach

Main assumptions in identifying in WP6 the key issues of the development in the Alps

Current issues of the development are acknowledged in regional policies, but ...

- they focus on most problematic issues in the regions, there is a need for a more **comprehensive vision** of development issues in the whole Alps
- issues addressed in policies may **change over times**
- the AC (and the EU) gives orientations to the regional development policies but does not **address all issue areas**



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WP6 approach

... that is why we assumed that steering regional development policies calls at first to identify the **main trends that influence regional development** and their possible evolution in the future



identifying key issues of the Alps questions how far they are sensitive to main trends that influence regional development

therefore, it questions how far these issues have specific expressions in the Alps



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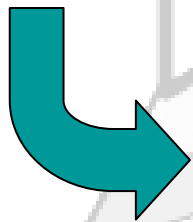
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WP6 method

The method: a Delphi survey

Alpine development issues are complex and are not perceived in an uniform way

To identify key issues for the future development in the Alps and referred problems, DIAMONT based on **opinions expressed by a panel of experts**



Delphi survey with the participation of 60 experts from 6 Alpine countries: 'stakeholders' (elected, civil officers, representatives of NGOs, etc) and 'scientists'



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WP6 method

Three survey rounds (June 2005 to January 2006)

- First round: **lists of relevant issues** with which the Alps are confronted or that are likely to develop in the future
- Second round: **analysis of issues** considered most important for the future through an assessment of 'theses' referred to issues
- Third round: means to **assess the importance** of the main issues both at the moment or in the future in alpine regions through related phenomena



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WP6 results

Identification of eight main issues that characterise current and future development trends in the Alps

general trends in
development

- globalisation
- rising awareness to threats on natural or cultural heritage
- increase in mobility for goods and persons
- demographic slow down
- change in meaning of local identities
- life styles standardisation
- etc...



reformulation in terms of
main issues of the
development in the Alps

- marginalisation of rural peripheral areas
- maintenance of Alpine forests
- urbanisation processes
- tourism sustainability
- transport pressures
- innovative and competitive economic activities
- maintenance and development of natural and cultural heritage
- climate change effects



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WP6 results

Some phenomena will be relevant to describe current and future developments of the main issues

urbanisation processes

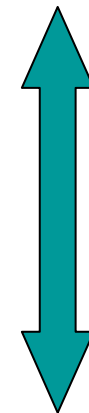
examples of referred problems

- negative side effects of urban expansion for small traditional centres
- lack of efficiency of land use planning in urban regions
- increasing role of agglomerations as economic focal points in alpine regions

examples of phenomena to describe the issue

- uncontrolled urban sprawl
- increasing attractiveness of Alpine agglomerations for the extra-Alpine population
- loss of social cohesion in suburban areas

high
relevance



low
relevance



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WP6 results

- Some issues have a particular resonance for certain **types of areas** in the Alps, but they can superimpose more or less in Alpine regions
- Main issues focused on are more **perennial** than evolutionary: they emerge from factors and conditions that do not change quickly, which are in link with general trends prevailing in Europe
- The interviewed experts' opinions tend to emanate from an **accentuation of the existing problems** in the future
- Divergences in experts' opinions resulted mainly from varying sensibility and less from objective factors (the nationality or the profile of the experts): they revealed more the **complexity of each main issue** than hard divergences on the nature and the importance of Alpine issues and related problems



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WP6 results

Were important issues left out?

- In expressing their own views, experts reacted above all on problems which have a **particular meaning** for the Alps
- Other aspects, less applicable to reveal the **differences between Alpine and extra-Alpine regions**, were less focused on, as for example the access to tertiary education to get better chances to catch employment opportunities providing high added value
- Further works in DIAMONT tackled development **issues in different perspectives**: for example WP10-11 concluded that a general issue in Alpine regions is their capacity to value their human, social, and environmental capital, followed by tacit knowledge, institutional innovation and flexibility, regional identity and interpersonal contacts