



Interreg IIIB-Project, Alpine Space Programme, co-financed by the EU



During the months May and July 2007 six workshops in selected test regions were held in five alpine countries. This Newsletter is going to introduce the six test regions and the main results achieved within the workshops. The participants of all workshops were highly motivated and enjoyed the introduced world cafe method as the participatory approach. They also showed active interest in the topics, providing useful advice and feedback on the local perception about their home territory. Additionally, Mr. Zengerle - one of the stakeholders of Immenstadt i. Allgäu in Germany - interviewed by Konstanze Schönthaler expresses his impression on the method and on his expectations on the first workshop as well as towards the second workshop.

Gap in France– Workshop held by Vincent Briquel / CEMAGREF

Core city: Population: 36.262 (1999); Altitude: 625 m above sea level

Gap is situated at the eastern border of the Drome Alps in the southeast of France 100 km south of Grenoble. It is well known for its cheese „Le Gapençais“. Frequently Gap is milestone of the Tour de France. Gap shares a town partnership with Traunstein in Germany and was also “Alpine town of the year” 2002. The city of Gap is part of the Gapençais region - “Pays Gapençais” - which groups 74 municipalities including the surrounding municipalities and the rural hinterlands, all of these strongly connected to Gap.



Workshop held in Gap

Stakeholders from the following public bodies attended the meeting: mayors (or assistant mayors), representatives of State authorities, officers working in municipal services, heads of inter-municipal co-operation structures, the executive director and members of the advisory board of the Contrat du Pays Gapençais, and finally representatives of local organisations (chamber of agriculture, employers associations and members of an association for employment and professional training in rural communities).

Main topics:

Demographic changes, current services and housing provision;

Employment, change in economic activities;

Pressures on land use in relation with social and economic development;

Inter-municipal cooperation and sharing a common development strategy for the whole region.

Main results:

The struggle for maintaining public services in rural municipalities does not prevent disappearance of current daily services. The location of housing for families is guided by facilities in children education which must not be located at same places as for working or for daily purchases. It was suggested to set up a service scheme for the whole region and to better integrate transport and mobility issues in local urban planning.

Infobox

First Workshop: 3rd of July 2007

Second Workshop: **October 2007**

Where: **Gap**

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Economic weakness of the region due to different forms of mono activity (tourism, agriculture, public services); high skilled workers do not find a proper job and must accept less paid jobs and part time jobs are especially for woman. Thus it was suggested to form multiple jobs within for example agriculture, forestry, building and winter sports and catch opportunities in relation with innovative activities.

Gap could gain 15000 inhabitants without consuming further space (filling up gaps with the urban fabric, rebuilding obsolete houses). But good traffic conditions within the core city have to be ensured. Consumption of agriculture surfaces is not seen as a main threat whereas land consumption by housing was important. Green areas open to visitors are more and more distant, since maintaining rural landscapes does not always meet with

a demand for recreation and leisure. One of the instruments mentioned was to set up a regional land planning scheme which is a long lasting process but necessary to limit space consumption and to fix guidelines that would be implemented in local urban planning objectives.

The multiplicity of inter-municipal cooperation forms and structure is seen as together as a chance and as difficulty to cope with in the region. Presently, there is a need to better articulate these structure and to rationalise the distribution of competencies. Instruments for monitoring and disseminating information in all municipalities were evoked and the “Pays Gapençais” is seen as a first step towards more comprehensive instrument. A better information system for mayors and stakeholders, but also for the public should be implemented.

Idrija in Slovenia – Workshop held by Mimi Urbanc and Janez Nared / *AMGI*

Core city: Population: 11.990 (2002), Altitude: 369 m above sea level

The city of Idrija is situated in the central western part of Slovenia. The region is well known for its tating tradition, which is performed since 300 years. Decisive for economic development was the finding of mercury ore, which provoked early industrialization. For a long period of time this was Europe’s largest mercury mine and the second largest town in the territory of nowadays Slovenia. After the WW2 the mine declined and was closed by 1990. Fortunately last decades were marked with a soft transition into one of the most successful electrical industry centers in Slovenia, known for its world-class high-tech firms.



Idrija

Stakeholders from the following public bodies attended the meeting: Mayor of the municipality of Idrija, members of the council of the local community of Idrija, Krnice-Masore and Kanomlja, member of the Slovene Democratic Party, president of the local community of Krnice-Masore, deputy director of the primary school of Idrija, president of the local chamber of craft, the president and one member of the association of country youth, president of the local community of Idrija, member of the local development agency.

Main topics:

Economic development and economic performance



Gewerkenegg castle

of the region respecting basic hindrances of economic progress in a municipality, improvement possibilities and the role of respective national regulations.

Problems, connected to regional transport and infrastructure with a special emphasis on improvement possibilities.

Spatial aspects of the economic progress in the region with limited building areas; the role of effective spatial planning and prudent land take management.

Quality of life as a prerequisite for a stable settlement structure and for revitalization of the region.

Cooperation as a basic need for regional integration and

common sustainable development based on regional flows of goods and people.

Main results:

In last few decades an evident progress is perceived, connected to a soft transition from mining into high-tech electrical industry sector. The success of the industry shows also some negative effects like a lack of workforce, which has caused movements of some factories in other regions and problems related to monostructural economy – employment possibilities only for a narrow group of population; weak private initiative related to momentary good condition of the economy. Due to specific natural condition further expansion of the economy is limited. Problems mentioned above could be resolved by minimization of administrative obstacles for entrepreneurs and also for construction.

The infrastructure is in a bad condition starting with bad road connections (regional and local), weak telecommunications infrastructure (inaccessibility of the internet, mobile telephones, TV programs) and insufficient communal infrastructure. Solutions could be reached by public-private partnerships, by formation of a new city-municipality, which would assure more competencies, and building of previously mentioned infrastructure with the help of means from the EU funds and direct state financing.

Infobox

First Workshop: 5th of Juny 2007

Second Workshop: *Second half of October 2007*

Where: *Idrija*

Due to its natural conditions new building areas are very limited. Consequently there are not enough areas for business and for residential buildings. The problem is intensified with lower quality of existing buildings. Accordingly some new areas outside the town centre should be found (on the outskirts of the municipality), in order to assure further economic and demographical development. Additionally the production of biomass should be strengthened to prevent the overgrowing of cultivated land. Countryside areas have to be stimulated in the direction of tourist development and preservation of the population.

The quality of life is good due to some natural factors. It could be improved by the construction of insufficient physical infrastructure and by enhancements of social infrastructure.

Idrija is the ‘edge – municipality’ in all kind of regions and focus only in one region is not possible. For this reason it cooperates with more regions and consequently those connections are weaker. The cooperation would be enhanced by better road connections.

Alpsee-Grünten Region in Germany – Workshop held by Konstanze Schönthaler and Stefan von Andrian-Werburg / *Bosch & Partner GmbH* and Andreas Raab / *Regional Planner*

Core city: Population: 48.373 (2006), Altitude: Immenstadt i. Allgäu: 732 m above sea level, Sonthofen: 745 m above sea level

The region corresponds to the municipalities of the Alpsee-Grünten-Alliance. The two core cities are Immenstadt i. Allgäu and Sonthofen, which was “Alpine town of the year” in 2005. Blaichach, Burgberg and Rettenberg are further members of the Alliance. The region forms part of the district Oberallgäu in the South-west of the German Alps and is named after the lake Alpsee and the mount Grünten, the so-called keeper of the Allgäu.



Region of Alpsee-Grünten

Stakeholders from the following public bodies attended the meeting: 16 local stakeholders: the five mayors of the five municipalities of the Alpsee-Grünten region, six representatives from the main offices and / or building authorities of the municipalities, one city treasurer, one director of a municipal department of business development, the director of the Department of Finances and Civil Engineering in the District Office Oberallgäu, the director of the Society of Regional Development Altusried-Oberallgäu, and one self-employed architect.

Main topics: Situation in the region considering its internal and external relationships; (upcoming) developments and challenges the region has to face up concerning its future (spatial) development

Demand of land for industrial and commercial developments; existing leeway with special view on existing and future demands of other land uses

Requirements for steering and action concerning the future development of industry, trade and services; common objectives which can be deduced from the requirements for action

Main results: The Alpsee-Grünten regions has to face some serious structural challenges: population is stagnating and age-structure is shifting towards more elderly people, jobs for high qualified people are missing, municipalities have limited freedom of action due to high indebtedness.

The Alpsee-Grünten Alliance should extend its activities from tourism marketing to overall regional development.



Participants of the workshop in Immenstadt i. Allgäu

A regional development organisation should be founded with the perspective to adjust it for a larger regional context if needed. Without an active inter-municipal cooperation the region does not see any chance to compete with the stronger adjacent regions.

Further development of industry, trade and the service sector will be indispensable for the region. Business development cannot be restricted on tourism any more.

Demand of and supply with industrial and commercial areas has to be better analysed and coordinated. Spatial resources are very scarce. Without inter-municipal cooperation there will be no chance to offer really attractive industrial and commercial to possible investors.

A better marketing will be necessary, inwards as well as outwards. This comprises an intensive communication with resident enterprises in order to know about their plans and necessities as well as a good deal more of active marketing of disposable areas. Also better information of the population about the actual situation, future perspectives and necessary actions are urgently needed. A rational management of the land resources can be a key for sustainable development.

Infobox

First Workshop: 17th of July 2007

Where: Immenstadt i. Allgäu

Second Workshop: 14th of September 2007

Where: Sonthofen

Tolmezzo in Italy – Workshop held by Loredana Alfare and Marco Zumaglini / *UNCCEM*

Core city: Population: 10.541 (2004), Altitude: 323m above sea level

Tolmezzo is located at the feet of the Strabut Mountain, between the Tagliamento River and the But stream in the federal Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia and includes 18 municipalities.



Core city Tolmezzo

Stakeholders from the following public bodies attended the meeting: Representatives of environmental associations, municipalities, research institutes, university, private citizens, urban planners etc.. Participants showed active interest in the topics, providing useful advice and feedback on the local actors' perception about their home territory.

Main topics:

What are the main problems and bottlenecks affecting the Region's development and quality of life?

What are the main factors relating to land take which hinder sustainable development?

Do services meet the Region's needs?

Does cooperation between local authorities, federal authority, stakeholders contribute to sustainable and shared development?

Which are the existing conflicts in your Region?

Main results:

The Municipalities are often undersized, also due to long-lasting depopulation: this usually implies being more exposed to political pressures from the higher level (federal). On the other hand, voluntary associations (esp., between municipalities) have proved poorly effective so far.

Lack of holistic and systemic vision and lack of adequate land and resource management capacity and planning tools (institutions and functions often overlap). Local authorities suffer from short-term vision, whilst the federal level doesn't provide them with a clear overview of the strategic implications of different courses of action.

Accessibility and isolation: not so much geographic as cultural and related to communication and exchange of information. Anyway, public transportation should be optimized, adapted to changing needs and encouraged against private mobility; furthermore, it suffers from being exclusively axed on the core city (Tolmezzo). Last but not the least, the area runs the risk of becoming a region of mere transit, crossed by (heavy-impacting) supra-regional infrastructure.

Lack of a shared vision for the area and (but this tends to be a national problem) lack of awareness on the common good: the social groups feel they are not adequately represented by the political parties any more. On the other hand, development of spontaneous interest groups can result in decision-stopping when excessive, even though they clearly reveal local social needs which should be acknowledged by higher-level projects impacting on their territories: failing to do so, reveals also the public administration's lack of both transparency in decision-making and experience with participatory and collaborative processes.

Education and training: not only should the offer become more adequate, but the need is also perceived for demand-stimulation on the part of the (public) education providers.

Development: tourism suffers from being scarcely profitable since based almost exclusively on second houses; on the other hand, EU projects have lacked of follow-up in terms of structural development and new professionalism so far.

Suggestions on further instruments (beside the ones identified by DIAMONT-UNCCEM staff) were hinted at, in order to tackle the highlighted problems effectively, even though it has been decided to postpone in-depth discussion about conflict resolution and effectiveness of the proposed instruments till the second workshop, due to take place next October. A supplementary contribution is expected to stem from comparison with the situation/results/instruments as discussed during the workshops carried out in the other participant Alpine countries.

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First Workshop: 20th of Juny 2007

Second Workshop: *October 2007*

Where: *Tolmezzo*

Traunstein / Traunreut in Germany – Workshop held by Stefan Marzelli, Claudia Schwarz, Sigrun Lange, Martin Kuhlmann, Florian Lintzmeyer / *ifuplan*

Core city: Population: 18.598 (2006), Altitude: 591 m above sea level

Traunstein is a town in the south-eastern part of the German Federal State of Bavaria, situated between Munich and Salzburg and 10 km east of Lake Chiemsee. The neighbouring City of Traunreut is the region's employment centre, while Traunstein is the historic and administrative centre of the labour market region.



The municipality Ruhpolding as part of the Labor Market Region Traunstein / Traunreut

Stakeholders from the following public bodies attended the meeting: Mayors of Traunstein, Waging a. See and Chieming, Head of Administrative and Legal Department Municipality of Traunstein, City Marketing Traunstein, Business Promotion Agency for the District of Traunstein, Federation for Nature Conservation (local chapter Traunstein), District Building Authority, Municipal Building Authority, Urban Planning Dept. Traunstein, three Agenda21-representatives, Waste Water and Environmental Association Chiemsee, EuRegio Salzburg – Berchtesgadener Land – Traunstein, District Environmental Agency

Main topics:

- Retail between local supply and competitiveness
- Steering settlement development towards more resource-efficiency
- Effects of demographic change
- Institutional development

Main results:

- Housing-related effects on land take are difficult to communicate.
- Inner-urban development is not sufficiently promoted through public programs and instruments.
- Inner-urban development should have priority over greenfield development.
- Rural municipalities are particularly in need of redensification concepts and schemes.



Participants of the workshop in Traunstein

- Consumption behaviour is responsible for local retail structure. Retail and housing concepts should be integrated.
- Inter-municipal competition for residents and businesses is negatively affecting sustainable land use planning.
- Supra-municipal, regional levels need to be strengthened in regard to steering spatial planning. Binding retail and local supply concepts need to be adopted on regional level and concisely implemented on municipal level.
- A joint body steering land resource management on regional level could be an appropriate instrument. This requires municipalities to transfer some local steering authority towards regional levels.
- Jointly drafted and binding trade-off mechanisms for commercial areas, ecological compensation etc.: Within the framework of the joint body, an inter-municipal balance of development burdens and benefits could be realised.

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First Workshop: 27th of June 2007

Second Workshop: 16th October 2007

Where: City Hall of Traunstein

Waidhofen an der Ybbs in Austria – Workshop held by Axel Borsdorf, Valerie Braun and Students from the University of Innsbruck / *UIBK*

Core city: Population: 11.662 (2001), Altitude: 356 m above sea level

The core city of the labor market region is Waidhofen an der Ybbs an independent city located in the Mostviertel in Lower Austria and is famous for its century old iron converting industry. The land between the Rivers Ybbs and Enns are the heartland of the must industry, an alcoholic beverage made of apple and pear.



Participants of the workshop in Waidhofen / Ybbs; The Labour Market Region Waidhofen / Ybbs

Stakeholders from the following public bodies attended the meeting: The mayor of Ybbsitz, local representatives from the core city, representatives from the local mountain association, doctors from the local hospital, one representative respectively from the regional forest service, the Catholic Church and the public train service, two teachers, one spatial planner.

Main topics:

What do you think of the quality of life within the labour market region? What are the opportunities and weaknesses of the region?

According to our national analyses for Austria for those municipalities situated within the borders of the Alpine Convention the labour market region Waidhofen / Ybbs belongs to one of those regions with the highest indicator values for land take.

Main results:

Life quality within the region was considered very high amongst the participants of the workshop; especially the good labour market and the good social climate were mentioned. An opportunity was seen in supra regional tourist projects and an improvement of the infrastructure - adjustment of business hours and extension of the already existing cycle track - to attract tourists to stay longer than a day within the region. Further the high variety of schools was mentioned as very positive and the establishing of a college was considered as a further opportunity for the region. Moreover further jobs could be created within nursing homes for elderly people, the processing of timber and with special funds for small businesses to decrease the great dependency of the region to those few companies with a high employment rate. The high commuter flow was seen as a weakness of the

region since especially family's move to the surrounding municipalities due to high land prices within the core city of the labour market region Waidhofen / Ybbs and commute to their workplaces with their private cars since the public transport is only on the main routes well developed. Solutions of the high commuter flow to the core city and the bad efficiency of the public transport should be presented by the politics in cooperation with a planning alliance and the companies of the region.

The participants have sensed this development as well and mentioned the high land prices and the lack of building land within the core city compared to the surrounding municipalities. Especially in some municipalities building land for young families is especially promoted. This development is considered as an increase of quality of life for young families and a sign for prosperity. Although this holds true only for some surrounding municipalities since in others the rededication of agricultural land towards building land is hard to accomplish. Nevertheless the urban sprawl and the lack of sustainability were mentioned by some participants.

Infobox

First Workshop: 12th of May 2007

Where: Waidhofen / Ybbs

Second Workshop: 21st of September 2007

Where: Ybbsitz



Interview with Siegfried Zengerle, city treasurer of Immenstadt and participant of the DIAMONT workshop (see page 3)

Interview was held by Konstanze Schönthaler during the workshop in Immenstadt on the 16th of July.

KS: Mr. Zengerle, you participated in our DIAMONT workshop held in the Alpsee-Grünten region. Did the workshop fulfil your expectations?

Zengerle: Yes, absolutely. It was very constructive and result-oriented. It initiated an important discussion within our region which will hopefully lead us to a more intensive cooperation of the municipalities.

KS: How did you get along with the workshop methodology of “world café”?

Zengerle: It could not have been better. We had an adequate size of the sub-groups [five to six people] and sufficient time for discussion in each round [40 to 45 minutes]. Also the duration of the whole workshop lasting half a day was just right. I especially liked the sub-group changing for each round. So we mixed more and got impulses from a lot of other participants while at the same time having a continuous thematic development in the discussion.

KS: The contribution of DIAMONT consisted in preparing the data for the German Alpine space, comparing your region with other Alpine regions and realizing special data interpretations for Alpsee-Grünten. Do you think that this contribution gave a helpful input for the workshop discussions?

Zengerle: Yes, for sure. The contents are very interesting. Now we have a really good overview where we are, also in comparison to other Alpine regions. In general, the data confirm our own perception. Nevertheless, in some cases we feel changing trends. For instance, we experience a certain easing of tension on the labour market since 2005. The loss of work places could be stopped. This development is not yet reflected in the data you analysed.

KS: Are there surprising results of the workshop?

Zengerle: Yes, there are. I was really astonished for the unanimity we reached and for the remarkable willingness for change. All participants expressed that much more inter-municipal cooperation will be needed for improving our future perspectives. We cannot continue with our “parish-pump politics” any more. We reached

a point I never expected, because we fixed as a common goal to struggle for the foundation of a regional development society giving us the past-due impulses for economic development and more rational use of the scarce space remaining. There was a high dynamic in the discussions.

KS: What do you expect from the next workshop?

Zengerle: I hope, we can further concretise our ideas. Therefore good-practice examples could be helpful.

KS: Thank you very much for your participation and see you again in September for the second workshop.

News of the Alpine Space

Conference: Managing Alpine Future

15 - 17 October 2007; Congress Innsbruck

Strategies for sustainability in times of change;

Due to climate change and effects of globalisation, increased dynamics in the natural as well as human environment are to be expected in mountain regions within the next years and decades. On the one hand, global change can no longer be ignored and denied, on the other hand, it cannot be reversed anymore on a short-term basis. It is, however, possible, to reduce its impacts by future-oriented political, institutional and personal actions. Representatives from science, industry and public authorities are to analyse the present state and especially the expected future developments by means of eight core topics. Approaches, strategies and solutions in dealing with these dynamic processes are going to be identified and discussed on both a transnational and transdisciplinary level. Inter alia, the impact of climate change on mountain biosphere reserves will be addressed. Furthermore, it is intended that all the participants agree on a statement concerning future active cooperation.

Info: <http://www.alpinefuture.com/>

Workshop «Agriculture in Alpine Protected Areas - Best practice and NATURA 2000»

14 - 15 September 2007; Hopfgarten im Defereggental, National Park Hohe Tauern (Osttirol)

Organisateurs / Co-organisateurs : ALPARC & Nationalpark Hohe Tauern

Sustainable agriculture in alpine protected areas (environmental measures, quality products, etc) and NATURA 2000 issues. Target group: protected areas' managers and staff in charge of agriculture or Natura 2000 issues

Info: <http://www.hohetauern.at>

Caravane through the Alps - Carovano delle Alpi

25.07.2007 - 31.10.2007

The fourth edition of the „Carovano delle Alpi“ is on its way through Italy. The Italian environmental organisation Legambiente will evaluate the state of health of the Italian Alps.

Info: <http://www.cipra.org/>

diamont calendar

October 4th to 5th 2007: 6th project meeting in Munich/G

May 15th 2007: Submission of 5th „pogress report“

6th accounting period in DIAMONT: March 2007 - 31. August 2007

web-site

The DIAMONT web-site provides up-date information on the project. <http://diamont.uibk.ac.at>

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