DIAMONT: Data Infrastructure for the Alps - Mountain Orientated Network Technology

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

newsletter Nr.9

May 2007

Within the months May and June 2007 six workshops in selected test regions are going to be held in five alpine countries. These workshops represent work package 10 within the DIAMONT project where selected regional instruments to steer sustainable development in the test regions are going to be tested. Whereas the next set of workshops - being held in September / October 2007 within work package 11 - will go a step deeper in fine-tuning selected instruments. The test regions were selected by data provided by WP8 who delineated labour market regions and with the help of further national analysis which were accomplished in three countries (France, Germany and Austria).

Concretisation of a theory

DIAMONT did not want to stay on a theoretical level. Therefore two work packages (WP10 and WP11) were envisaged in order to gain usefulness and appropriateness of selected regional development instruments as a tool for improvement of regional policy in six selected regions. Within the workshops representing work package 10 the selected instruments of land resource management will be discussed in view of sustainable regional development, while WP11 will go a step further in fine-tuning of selected instruments and solving detected problems. Hence in the second workshop we will provide and discuss strategies for the solution of problems brought forward in WP10 by the stakeholders. In mid May in 2007 when this article was written the WP10 has already been in full swing; the preparatory phase was ended and workshops were about to take place.

According to the main aim, workshops will be performed in order to get an opinion of the main stakeholders regarding the instruments provided for better regional development in the selected alpine areas. Stakeholders will get the opportunity to utter their views on the use of development tools in their regions. Furthermore, the workshops will promote public participation in policy making by involving stakeholders and citizens and thus raising their awareness for these issues.

Preparatory phase

There were two time consuming and difficult tasks to be performed before confrontation with stakeholder in case study areas: selecting test areas and analysing them. The first task was carried out by EURAC from Bolzano/Bozen within the work package 8 (see article on page 4). Their work referring to test areas selection was based on agreement between partners on an integrative issue/main trend for DIAMONT, which was “Urban centres and fringes between competition and co-operation - Steering towards sustainability”. In the next steps this issue was narrowed to labour market regions which were defined as centres with more than 10.000 inhabitants and more than 5.000 employees. Having a positive commuter balance was an additional criterion. The map and the data provided by EURAC collaborators were the starting point for partners to select the appropriate test area. Additionally partners from Germany, Austria and France carried out extensive national analysis in order to select a suitable and sensible test area with the help of additional indicators.

First workshops successfully being held in Waidhofen / Ybbs (Austria)

On the 12th of May 2007 stakeholders of the labour market region Waidhofen / Ybbs in Austria met for a workshop organised by the Austrian partners within the DIAMONT project.They discussed very enthusiastically about regional development in their region and the provided instruments. More workshops will take place in Germany (Immenstadt and Traunstein), Italy (Tolmezzo), Slovenia (Idrija), and France (Gap-region).

Content

The next step encompasses a context analysis of the selected region. The object of this step is to get an insight into the selected test region. This enables us to choose appropriate instruments and to interpret them after the workshops. The analysis is composed of the indicator analysis and the SWOT analysis. The result of the former is a database comprising of available harmonised data selected within WP8 and additional national data for the specific test area. This database is divided into three thematic fields: productive environment, human resources and basic infrastructure. For each of this problem field a SWOT analysis which gives insights into somebody's strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats is carried out. The SWOT-Analysis (SWOT stays for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) is

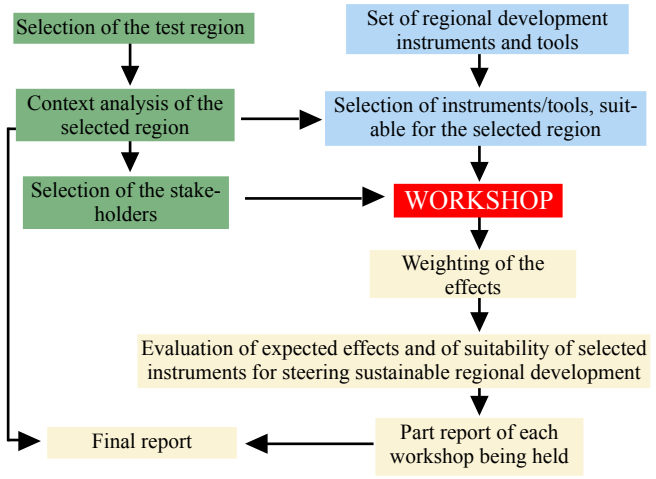


Fig. 1: Tasks within WP10 for the preparation of the workshops

a quick methodology to define starting position of the test regions. Strengths and weaknesses are focused on the actual internal situation of the region, opportunities and threats to the future. The SWOT analysis is an effective strategy maximizing strength and chances and minimizing weaknesses and threats for regions.

The workshops

The main aim of the workshop – which is the crucial part of the WP10 – is to select all possible effects that could be caused by single specific instruments. All effects will be divided into different groups according to their value – either positive or negative. To make a complete set of possible effects the range of different stakeholders must be broad enough in order to guarantee the involvement of all crucial groups relevant for the development of the area. The group of stakeholders involved in workshop should count more than 20. They should represent all important interest groups in the area – social, cultural, economic. All participants should have a profound knowledge about the situation in the test region, especially good knowledge about topics covered by their institution.

Potential stakeholders for workshop in WP10 (gender issue is taken into consideration):

- major of the selected municipality,
- representatives of the municipality for each pillar of sustainable development – economy, environment and social matters,
- representative of local economic association (local chamber of economy, local chamber of trade),
- representative of local tourist organization,
- representative of local or regional development agency,
- representative of a regional government (if such political body exists),
- representative of the company, which is the biggest employer in the area,
- representative of the most successful company in the area,
- representatives of any national, regional or local natural park in the area,
- representatives of NGO's,
- representatives of research institutes.

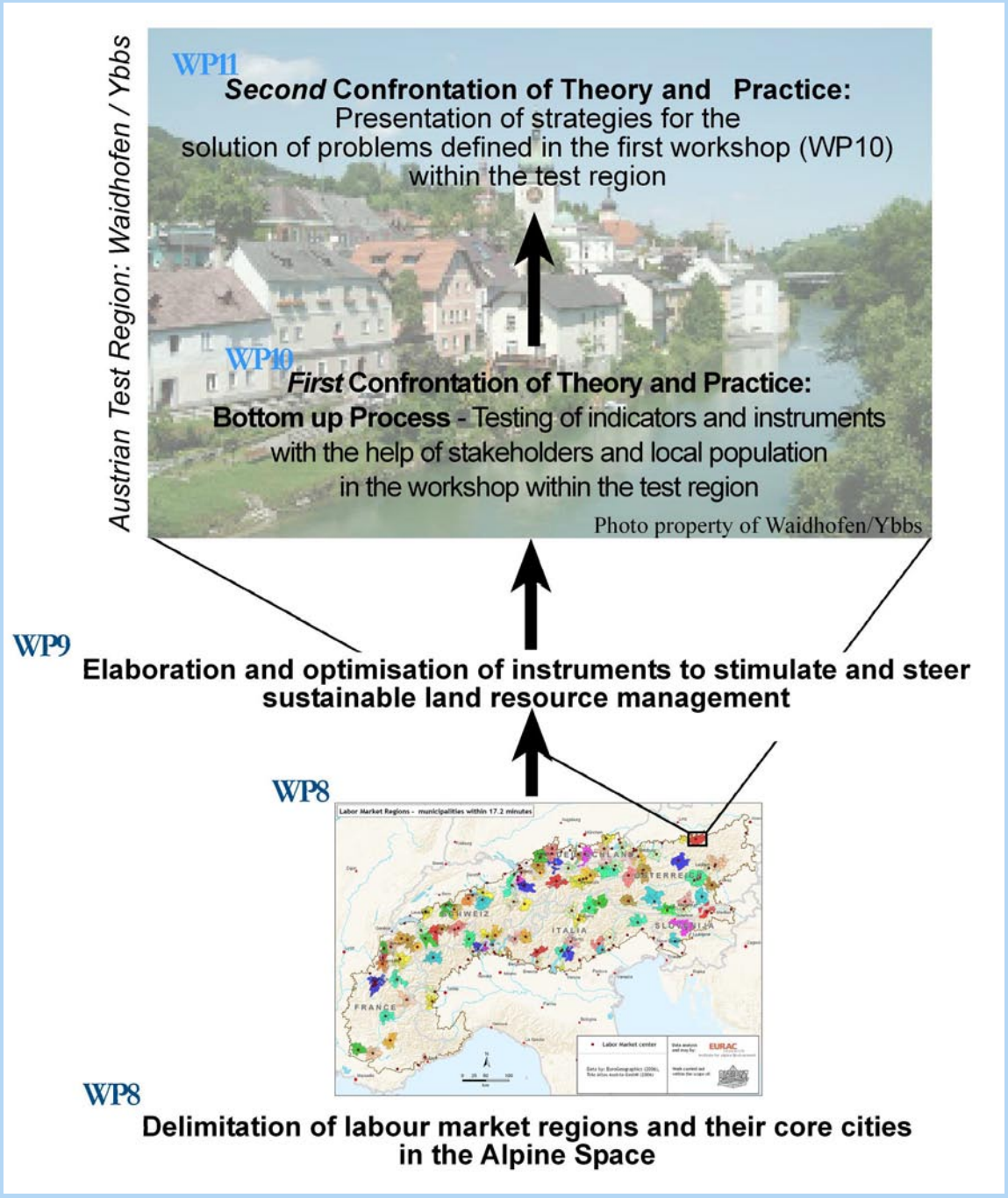
Other representatives, linked to the people in the region (priest, doctor) and those, important for the test region from the context analysis perspective:

- citizen groups,
- private individuals,
- directors of schools,
- pupils,
- real-estate managers,
- others (representatives of other interest groups according to each partners choice).

Our method for the workshop is a simplification of the World Café Conversations method, which is a creative process for leading collaborative dialogue, sharing knowledge and creating possibilities for action in groups of all sizes. This flexible method is relatively easy to organize. It can be organized and facilitated by a single person or by a team, as available. In any case, one or two persons act as facilitators. The job of the facilitator is to see that the guidelines for dialogue and engagement are put into action.

The environment is set up like a café, with tables for four-five persons. People sitting to a table have a series of conversational rounds lasting from 15 to 20 minutes for about one or more questions presented by the facilitator. They write on a big sheet the answers to the questions and after 15—20 minutes a person chosen by the group (the reporter) presents the results to the audience. The second group acts the same. Each sheet is put on a wall. In subsequent rounds they answer to new questions or go deeper into the original one. After three or more rounds,

Plan of interactions between the workpackages (WP8 till WP11) within the DIAMONT project



the whole group gathers to share and explore emerging themes, insights, and learning's, which are captured on flipcharts or other means for making the collective intelligence of the whole group visible to everyone so they can reflect on what is emerging in the room. During the coffee break the facilitators summarize the results on the flipchart asking to participants to assign marks (from 1 to 5) to the topics according to their priorities in the case study area.

The bottom-up approach is considered a normative participation process based on people participating in the decision process from the very beginning. It therefore contrasts with the usual top-down approach based on a hierarchical structure. The main advantage of adopting a bottom up approach is participant identification with decisions concerning their environment. It is important to underline that bottom-up process will not be successful without top-down governmental support and side-in effects due to support from NGOs, research institutes etc increasing know-how and competence within the region. When performing a workshop it is important to include people who are protagonists and to establish a dialogue with them. They must perceive that their contribution is not finalized for our purposes (to prepare a report) but that we really want to help them in a concrete way providing different solutions for their conflicts.

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New DIAMONT collaborator (UNCEM)

Marco Zumaglini

Marco Zumaglini officially joined the DIAMONT team of UNCEM in April. His role in the project will consist of support to *Loredana Alfarè's* work with special reference to preparation of the Italian test region Context Analysis. Born in Turin, where he graduated in hydraulic engineering, he was involved in the preparation of a number of INTERREG project proposals, and has been working as a freelance on the following projects:

«PROGECO – Protection du territoire par le biais du génie écologique à l'échelle de bassin versant» (carried out in the framework of INTERREG III B - MEDOCC); he developed the Hydrologic Analysis for the Sardinian pilot watershed, and played a major role in the preparation of the project Guidelines («Lignes Directrices pour l'application du génie écologique et de bonnes pratiques de gestion du territoire en milieu méditerranéen»);

"WAREMA – Water resources management in protected areas" (still ongoing in the framework of INTERREG III B – CADSES); his tasks consist of the preparation/supervision of the following environmental and water resource management tools, addressing the problems/opportunities in the pilot watersheds: Context Analyses, Action Plans and Spatial Planning Concepts.

Fluent in English, French and Spanish, he started his international experience in 1997 as Resident Engineer on an Italian-Bulgarian project concerning Sofia water supply management. Another key field of interest is represented by the study of the effects of land use changes on the occurrence of natural disasters, esp. floods: to this goal, he has been keeping up-to-date with the recent advances of theoretical/experimental knowledge, as well as gaining a good expertise in the use of hydrological models allowing evaluation of stream flow changes subsequent to different land use scenarios.

Labour Market Regions in the Alps

One of the most important objectives of WP8 was to implement an identification of Alpine wide local centres and fringes. These data are useful for the delineation of the test regions, in which the urbanization process as main focus of DIAMONT will be analyzed. Moreover in some selected regions the tools which have been worked out in WP 9 will have to be elaborated and optimized in order to stimulate and steer regional development. To this purpose two workshops will take place in each region (see WP10 and WP11).

But how can regions of similar development be deduced? Starting point of our considerations were the so called „urban areas“ (PERLIK 2001). They are regions in whose centre there is a small and medium sized town (SMESTO). These centres surround municipalities which are strongly linked to the centre thanks to natural conditions, historical background and regional labour market. Together with the core cities they form the urban areas. We could adopt the basic idea of connected regions, which had to be especially adjusted to the DIAMONT project. A clear distinction between our regions and the „urban areas“ is drawn by the fact that we do not take into consideration cultural and historical connections between the surrounding municipalities. Our main focus is on the labour market. Therefore the delineated regions we are talking of are „Labour Market Regions“ (LMR), see fig. 1. In their centre there is a Labour Market Centre (LMC) that is a municipality or city with following features:

- more than 10.000 inhabitants or
- more than 5.000 employees and
- a positive commuter balance.

Ideally a city or a rural municipality forms the centre of a LMR. In some cases, however, several municipalities with corresponding features are situated so close to each other, that they form a common LMR. Some examples of this structure are following regions: Salzburg / Wals-Siezenheim / Freilassing or Albertville / Ugine.

Besides a certain number of work places, another very important factor in the selection of centres is a positive commuter balance. Only these centres exert actually a force of attraction on employees of neighbouring municipalities. Nevertheless, through lack of data about real commuter flows, we do not know where employees come from. We do however assume that a large part of commuters are coming in from surrounding municipalities therefore only municipalities with a negative commuter balance were assigned to a LMR. Additionally we were only interested in LMRs inside the Alpine bow: all LMRs situated not entirely in the Alpine bow have therefore

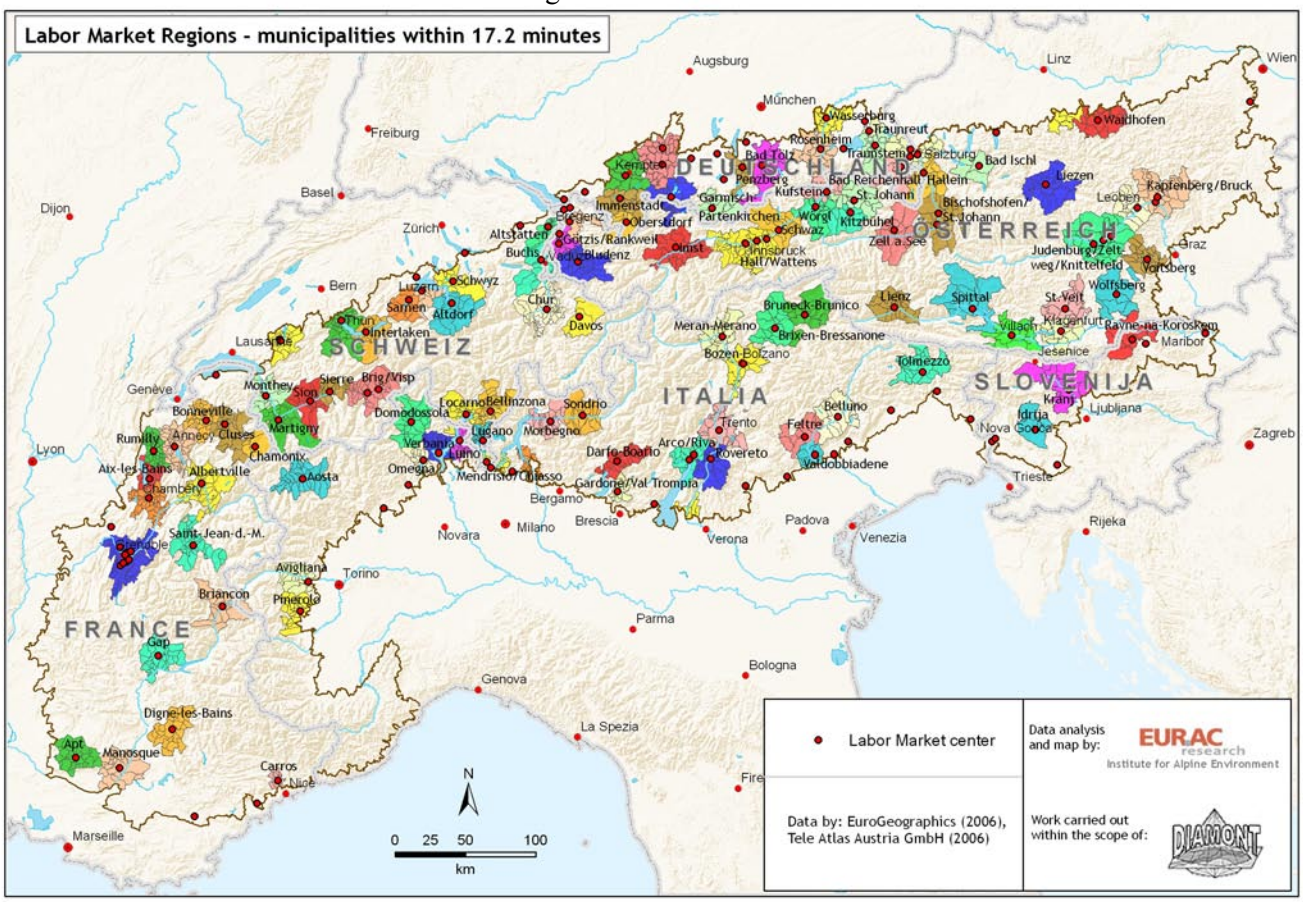

Fig. 1: The distribution of labour market regions (LMRs) within the Alpine bow: Max. driving time of 17.2 min from surrounding municipalities to the Labour market center (LMC); positive commuter balance of the LMC and a negative commuter balance of the surrounding municipalities.

been excluded from following analysis. Altogether there are 108 LMRs in the Alpine bow (Fig. 1), most of them are situated in Austria (28), 24 are in Italy , 20 in Switzerland, 17 in Germany, 16 in France and 3 in Slovenia. In Lichtenstein there is no proper LMR, but the municipalities of Lichtenstein have been assigned to the LMR of Buchs (CH).

On average LMRs are formed by approx. 20 municipalities, whereas in French and Swiss LMRs some more municipalities are put together and in Germany and Slovenia significantly less municipalities are combined in one LMR.

A similarly balanced picture emerges from the total area of LMRs too. On average it is approx. 550 km², where German LRMs are a little under the average and Slovenian LMRs are clearly above it.

The next step was to identify different development types of the LMRs. For this reason in WP 7 (Schönthaler et al. 2007) indicators were defined, which could describe this process and help to typify LMRs. Thanks to a hierarchical cluster analysis (Ward methods, Euclidian distance) it was possible to identify 3 LMR-types:

1) High dynamic type: One of the most important features of these LMRs is a very high growth rate in all the analyzed indicators. For example the population but also the work places have increased considerably between 1991 and 2000. The growth of incoming commuters is much higher than the one of outgoing commuters. Also the attraction of the LMCs has grown intensively in the past 10 years. Only as for the development of tourist beds, these LMRs have not reached a leading position. *None of the selected test regions for the workshops are in this category.*

2) The dynamic type has growth rate values within the average of all the analyzed indicators. Only the indicator "growth of tourist beds" is above the average. *The selected test regions of Germany (Immenstadt and Traunstein) belong to this type.*

3) The stagnating one, shows growth rate values definitely under the average, and the values of young population and development of tourist beds are even negative. This means that these regions have experienced an excessive aging of the population and have lost some of their importance as tourist areas between 1991 and 2000. *Idrija (Slovenia), Tolmezzo (Italy), Waidhofen / Ybbs (Austria) and the Gap-Region in France are members of this type.*

These delineations were the basic for the selection of the test region in each participating country within the Alpine bow. Whereas in some countries national analysis were accomplished for further interpretations of the LMR's with data only accessible to the respective countries.

Literature

PERLIK, M. (2001): Alpenstädte – zwischen Metropolisation und neuer Eigenständigkeit. Geographica Bernensia 38.

CARNAZZI WEBER, S. & RÜHL, T. (2006): NAB Regionalstudie Aargau 2006. Credit Suisse Economic Research, Zürich (CH).

Objective measurable phenomena of sustainable development

In the newsletter from February 2007 the indicator database was introduced, which was developed in the context of WP8 at the European Academy Bozen (EURAC), to measure sustainable development in the Alps. This database is the basis for identifying similar municipalities within the Alpine bow yet not generating similiar connected regions like the labour market regions described above. The LMRs were defined in order to describe the main trend within the DIAMONT project.

Reduction from information through aggregation

Altogether a set of 63 indicators was elaborated and applied in the further analysis. The single indicators serve as proxies for specific subject areas, which we would like to measure. One of these subject areas could be the topic "gender-aspects" which can be measured for example with the indicator "female employment rate". We are interested primarily in the subject areas or phenomena, and not in single indicators in all their details and how they are distinct in the single municipalities. Therefore the indicators must be aggregated or combined.

In order to combine indicators to phenomena and assign them weights, the factor analysis is used. All in all we extracted 20 factors or phenomena, of which 14 were employed in further analyses. These phenomena can be interpreted very well and are moreover clearly attached to one of the three pillars of sustainability. The phenomena identified in this way are demonstrated in figure 1.

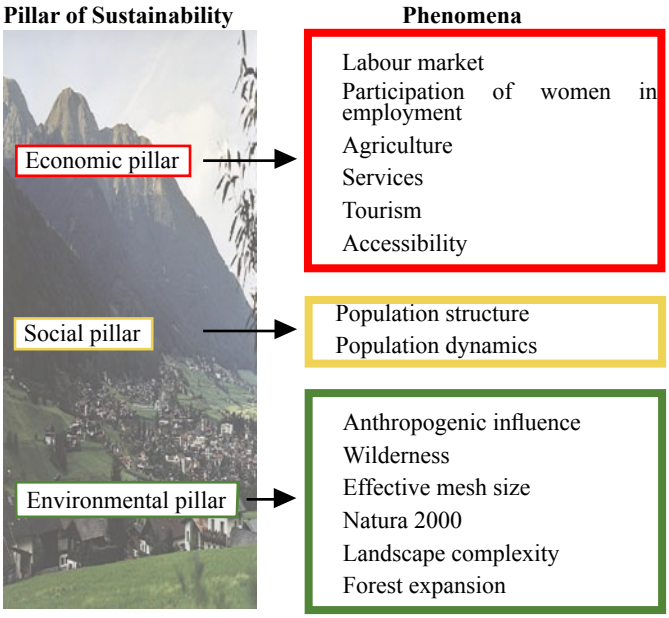

Fig. 1: Allocation of the 14 phenomena to the pillars of sustainability.

A classic example and an important topic within the discussion about sustainability is ageing, which is displayed by the factor "population structure". The following indicators show high factor loadings in this factor and are therefore relevant:

- Age distribution (young-age- and old-age-dependency ratio);
- Social isolation (persons living alone and especially aged people living alone);
- Population growth.

Municipalities with a high factor value have a high percentage of aged residents and a decrease of inhabitants with a high ratio of people living alone. On the contrary municipalities with a low factor value represent a relatively young and dynamically growing population.

Particularly the Italian alpine space is characterized by a decrease of population and a high ratio of aged inhabitants, with the exception of South Tyrol showing a structure comparable to the western parts of Austria. Some regions in the French Alps also show a decreasing and aged population

Identification of similar regions in the Alpine Space

The single phenomena allow a good overview over the actual situation of the alpine municipalities concerning certain topics. But due to the multiplicity of topics it is still rather difficult to identify similar regions. For this purpose the phenomena were used to identify 3-4 groups of municipalities for each pillar of sustainability (used method: cluster analysis).

The three groups within the economy pillar can be described with respect to their general state of development as well as considering the focus of their economic activities (Fig. 2):

1) Very well developed; Main focus on tertiary sector;
2) Well developed; Main focus on secondary sector;
3) Poorly developed; Main focus on agriculture

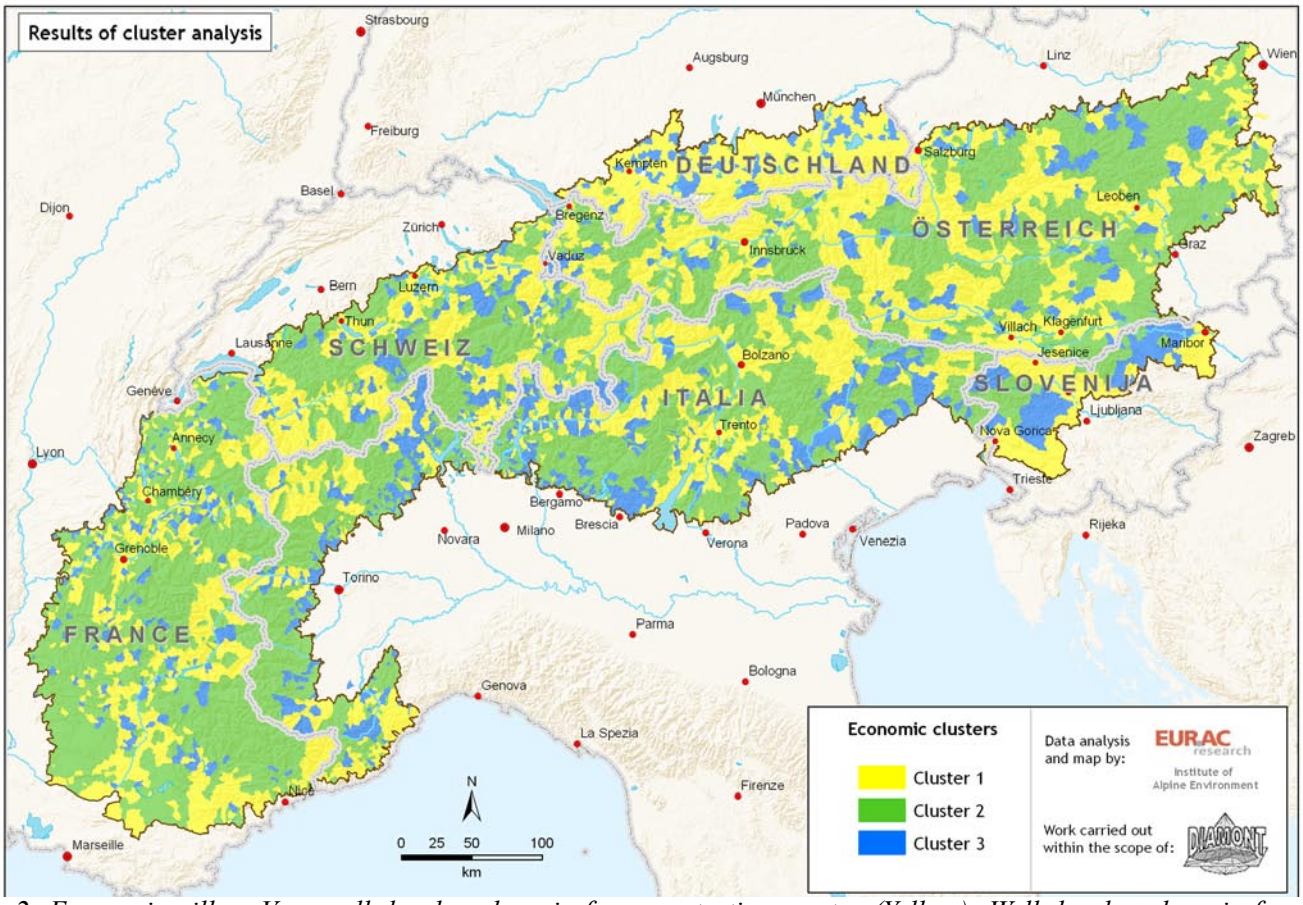

Fig. 2: Economic pillar: Very well developed, main focus on tertiary sector (Yellow); Well developed, main focus on secondary sector (blue); Poorly developed, main focus on agriculture (green).

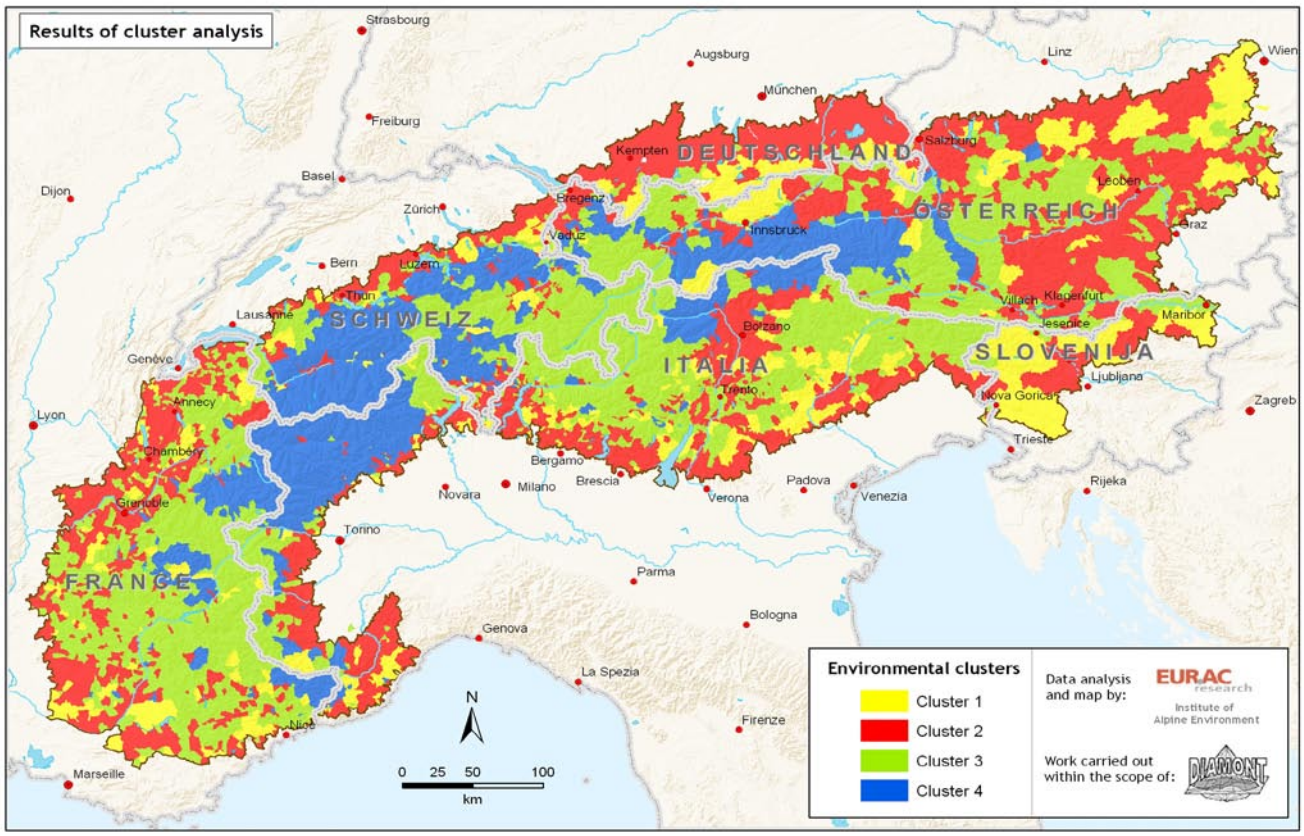

Fig. 3: Environmental pillar: Municipalities with a high forest contingent on the boundary of the Alps (yellow); Municipalities with a higher than average anthropogenic influence on the boundary of the Alps (red); Municipalities with a high biodiversity within the central of the Alps (green); Municipalities with a high ratio on natural areas in high mountain regions within the central of the Alps (blue).

Within the environmental pillar four groups were identified in order to achieve a better differentiation (Fig.4):

1) Municipalities with a high forest contingent on the boundary of the Alps;

2) Municipalities with a higher than average anthropogenic influence on the boundary of the Alps;

3) Municipalities with a high biodiversity within the central part of the Alps;

4) Municipalities with a high ratio of natural areas in high mountain regions within the central regions of the Alps.

Within the social pillar the municipalities can be characterized as follows (Fig. 4):

1) Young and fast growing population;

2) Aged and slightly decreasing population;

3) Very young and slowly growing population.

Prospects

The next step will be to combine the cognitions of the three pillars and we are very anxious to find out. Also the work within the test regions will show among other things how the delineations of the LMRs and the phenomena belonging to the three pillars are interwined.

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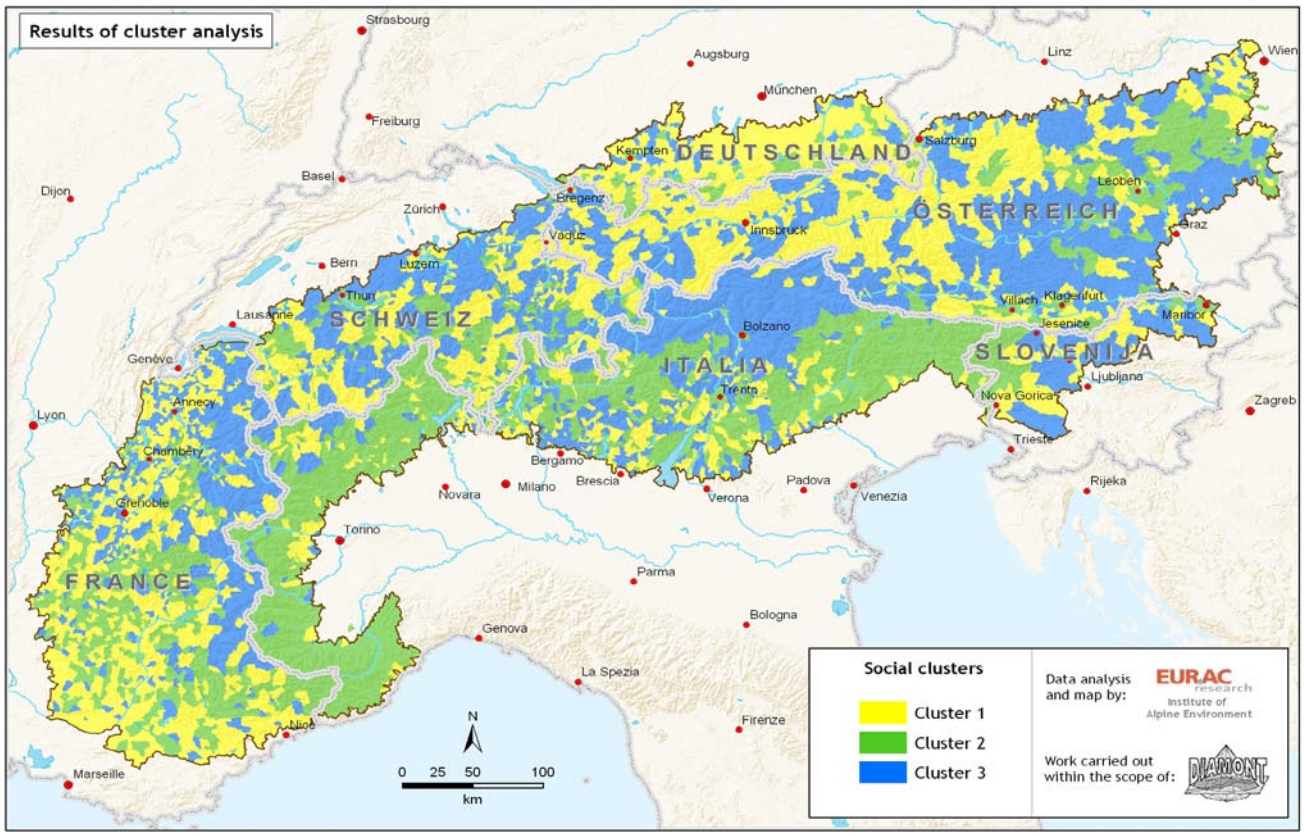

Fig. 4: Social pillar: Young and a fast growing population (yellow); Aged and slightly decreasing population (green); Very young and slow growing population (blue).

News from the Alpine Space

European Territorial Cooperation 2007-2013: Alpine Space Heading for Excellence

The transnational programme conference ALPINE SPACE HEADING FOR EXCELLENCE will take place on 28th and 29th June 2007 in St.Johann im Pongau, Austria.

At this conference you will be informed about the concrete possibilities offered by the new Operational Programme and its new approach to cooperation. 350 expected participants from different working fields - key players in the Alpine Space, current and new potential partners, policy and decision makers - will meet with the common aim to exchange and generate new projects for the upcoming open calls.

By visiting some "projects in action" through organised field trips you will also get an insight on concrete results of successful Alpine cooperation.

Info: http://alpinespace.org/event-interreg-iv.html

Management of alpine nature protection areas - a chance for regional development?

13th till 15th of June 2007: Disseminating knowledge – networking people: International workshop series 2006-2007 of „Future in the Alps":

Management plans, the interaction with local people, the contribution to the regional development as well as problems and challenges for the stakeholders will be shown by the comparison of different kinds of nature protection areas. Target groups are manager of nature protection areas, representatives of local communities as well as scientists and students.

Info: http://www.cipra.org/de/zukunft-in-den-alpen

Institut de Géographie Alpine IGA in Grenoble/F

Between the 4th and the 8th of June 2007 the IGA will celebrate its 100th anniversary.

Info: http://iga.ujf-grenoble.fr (fr).

International workshop on the cooperation of urban-rural interactions in Autrans/F held by CIPRA-France on the 4th and 5th of June 2007

The relationship of alpine cities and their fringes is becoming closer and likely to cause conflicts. CIPRA will be organising a workshop on this topic within the context of the project "future in the alps" in Autrans/F. Info: http://www.cipra.org/fr/avenir-dans-les-alpes (fr)

diamont calendar

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

April 16th 2007: Project meeting in Innsbruck/A

January 25th to 27th 2007: 5th project meeting in Grenoble/F

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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