



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



In the last of the DIAMONT newsletters, some of the partners summarise the achievements and point to future uses for the results of the project. In recent months the focus was on the final DIAMONT conference. On February 1, 2008, experts from all Alpine countries gathered in Innsbruck to debate the findings presented by academics, officials, planners, and mayors from some of the test regions. In the breaks participants could study individual aspects more closely on the poster presentations in the foyer. DIAMONT will end in March with the publication of an atlas of the indicators under the title „Mapping the Alps“. The DIAMONT database will be installed for further public use and the remaining WP reports will also be published and will include a DVD with a short documentary on the six test regions.

A success story for future sustainable regional development in the Alps

On the 1st of February 2008 participants of the *EU Interreg IIIB DIAMONT Project*, experts from all Alpine countries - scientist, officials, planners, and mayors from some of the test regions - as well as an interested public gathered for the final conference in Innsbruck to present and hear the results of three years of research on aspects of sustainable regional development in the Alps.

Competitiveness, attractiveness, accessibility and connectivity have long been considered drivers of local and regional development. Led by Prof. Axel Borsdorf and Prof. Ulrike Tappeiner from the University of Innsbruck, a committed team of researchers from six Alpine states have been looking for instruments to identify the right ingredients for sustainable local and regional development. Within the *DIAMONT* project they established a data base with essential indicators which should support municipal and regional decision makers in developing sustainable concepts.



Axel Borsdorf (DIAMONT) and Ulrike Tappeiner (DIAMONT)

Mag. Franz Rauter, head of the department for land-use planning and statistics at the Tyrolean federal state government, was convinced that "...many subjective factors play a part in spatial planning and regional development, but we need a comprehensible basis; individual experience is not enough". Thomas Fleury of the *Alpine Space* Programme added, "Enhancing competitiveness and appeal within the Alpine Space is achievable through joint action in those areas in which sustainable solutions require transnational cooperation. The *DIAMONT* project has proved convincingly that scientific expertise, practical knowledge and the participation of the population in the Alpine countries and across national borders can produce sustainable



Participants of the plenum “From individual perceptions and statistical data to instruments for land resource management”, from left to right: Chair: Ulrike Pröbstl (BOKU, Austria), Stefan Marzelli (ifuplan, Germany), Wolfgang Pfefferkorn (CIPRA International) and Axel Borsdorf (UIBK, Austria).

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solutions". Dr. Marco Onida, Secretary General of the Alpine Convention, added, echoing his colleague Regula Imhof: "The challenge for the Alpine Convention will now be to build on the results of the project after its completion. The indicators developed within *DIAMONT* are useful for accompanying regional processes of sustainability in an efficient and effective manner".

Attention focused particularly on the element of public participation, implemented as workshops with the local population of Gap (France), Waidhofen and Ybbsitz (Austria), Immenstadt and Traunstein (Germany), Idrija (Slovenia) and Tolmezzo (Italy): "Change can only



The audience at the final conference

be initiated by the people themselves. Involving civil society, NGOs and individuals in municipal decision-making processes is an expression of and at the same time a guarantee for an awareness of the problems in the local population", stressed Jernej Stritih, Slovene representative of CIPRA. "The stakeholders are the residents and the local population within its individual context", Prof. Antonio Massarutto from the University of Udine added.

Another attractive aspect was the involvement of students in the research process. Prof. Tillmann Märk, vice-rector of the University of Innsbruck, was pleased that "this EU project and the related university courses gave young researchers and particularly students the opportunity to apply scientific methods in practice".

The final conference of the project culminated in a panel discussion involving the mayors of Traunstein, Burgberg, Idrija, and Ybbsitz. They debated to what extent the workshops held in their municipalities had contributed to the emergence of new perspectives. The mayor of Traunstein, Fritz Stahl, reported plenty of agreement with the issues but no substantial change of attitudes. Feedback from the local population in Burgberg, Traunstein, and Idrija, however, was positive throughout. Mayor Bojan Sever reported from his municipality that this was the first time the local population of Idrija has had the opportunity to discuss their priorities. Mayor



Participants of the plenum "Indicators of regional development", from left to right: Regula Imhof (Alpine Convention), Franz Rauter (federal state of Tyrol, Austria), Chair: Antonia Milbert (Federal Office for Building and Regional Planning, Germany), Konstanze Schönthaler (Bosch&Partner, Germany), Erich Tasser (EURAC, Italy)

Josef Hofmarcher from Ybbsitz explained that the workshops within the *DIAMONT* project had given local politics new impulses. The project team is convinced that making use of the indicators in the *DIAMONT data base*, plus increased participation at municipal level can ensure local and regional sustainability.



The discussion....



....was carried on in the foyer during the breaks

Outlook – future developments on the basis of DIAMONT ifuplan

At the end of the Interreg IIIB project DIAMONT a number of results are available as well as newly established principles for further substantive debates. Moreover, sustainable regional development within the Alpine space is being monitored.

Major results of DIAMONT – qualitative issues and harmonised data

The qualitative results of the project include an investigation into the cultural influences behind regional development and an identification of future themes on the basis of a pan-Alpine expert survey. In addition, by harmonising the spatial monitoring data across the Alps at municipal level and identifying data gaps, i.e. missing indicators that would be needed for sustainability monitoring across the Alps but are not (yet) available, we managed to create a comprehensive basis of data and at the same time show up the areas where more work on such a data basis is needed.

The central challenge – the new role of regional cooperation

The work in the test regions with representatives and actors at local level was an integrated element of the last phase of the DIAMONT project and served as feedback on the results. This is where the complex theme of cross-sectoral regional cooperation within the Alps emerged as one of the central challenges for future development, a development that confronts the polarisation of Alpine subregions – both internally as well as externally – with the vision of a cooperative spatial development.



Working in the test region: Waidhofen / Ybbs (AT),

Tolmezzo (I), Idrija (SL)

Against the background of two processes running in opposite directions, the issue of cooperation between relatively autonomous regional bodies is currently gaining new topicality. Subsidiarity within a Europe of regions, i.e. moving decision-making responsibilities as close to the citizens as possible, in many places contrasts with regionalised and sometimes even globalised challenges to local politics. Hitherto classical areas of municipal policy-making, such as the local economy and tourism, settlement trends and the provision of public services, education and social services as well as safeguarding the

complex interdependent ecological foundations of our living space, have in many places outgrown their local confines.

Core and key indicators derived from factor analysis

Within DIAMONT, factor analysis was used to extract the actually relevant information from the immensity of imaginable indicators. This method opened up new opportunities for reducing the required effort for gathering, analysing and interpreting data effectively without major loss of information.

In future this method could be used to build up an efficient information management that would cover all essential elements of sustainable regional development on the basis of scientifically sound selection of core and key indicators for the entire Alpine space.

Broad, unlimited access to spatial information

The DIAMONT project was able to show for selected data how national data can be gathered and harmonised - often requiring painstaking detailed work - thus providing new spatial and cross-border information. With increasing regional and global interdependence, such data will become an ever more important source of information for citizens as well as decision makers in administration, politics, economy and NGOs.

Establishing such a data structure as well as other data on specific topics in publicly accessible, self-updating form would be an essential future development of this impulse from the DIAMONT project. A web-based GIS that can represent the relations between content and space in an easily understandable and, ideally, interactive manner would be an appropriate form and at the same time capable of showing the spatial manifestation of the data.

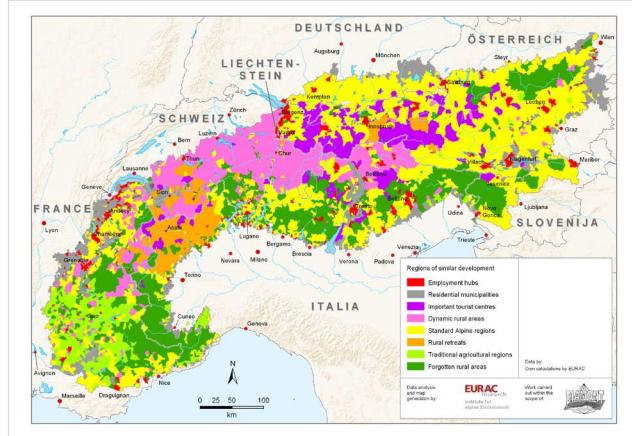
Additions to and further development of the instrument data base

The instruments gathered on the issue of land resource management represent only a selection of instruments for regional development within the Alps. With the completion of the DIAMONT project, the DIAMONT data base becomes publicly available, thus ensuring that the instruments presented can be put to use. The benefits, acceptance and added value of the database could be further increased if instruments on new topics and additional criteria for supporting the users were added to this collection of instruments.

The need for functionally coherent regions

Local decision makers within the Alpine space are aware of the above-mentioned shift of scope on to the regional level, but they lack models to overcome the discrepancy between local decision-making competence and regional

problems. How can we arrive at functionally coherent spatial units to attribute to the various issues within Alpine spatial development, such as settlement trends and development of transport, infrastructural policies, labour market and education, prevention against natural hazards and nature conservation? Spatial units that would allow dealing with these issues in an effective way whilst staying close to the citizens?



Developing a typology of the Alpine space, based on economic, environmental and social aspects with the help of cluster analysis

The objective data basis of indicators, which has been harmonised for the entire Alpine space at municipal level, may support local actors in identifying appropriate regions for cooperation, sometimes across national borders, and to make use of them. Such an outlook would add a new facet to the existing administrative, economic and historic regions of the Alpine space and enrich the perspectives for political action.

Regardless of such development potential it must be stressed that indicators for spatial development may offer a basis for possible new regional coherences and ways of solving problems within the Alps, but it is up to the local and regional actors and decision makers to implement them and make them come to life.

Developing regional land resource management in the test regions

The workshops carried out in six test regions within the DIAMONT project were able, in each of the regions, to give an impulse, start up debates and encourage a desire to explore possibilities of regional cooperation further.

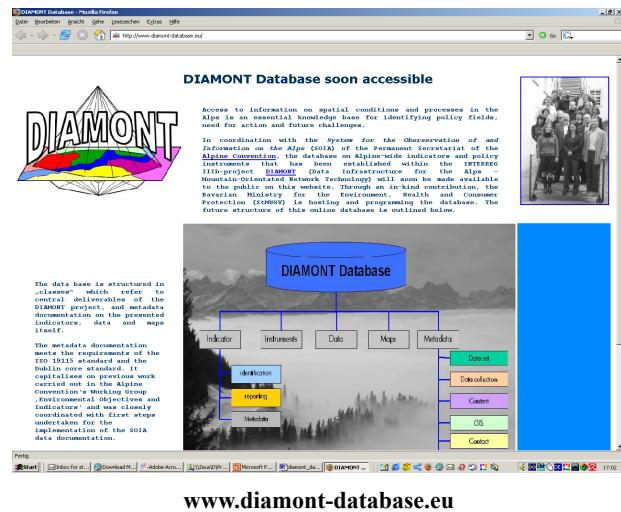
If the collected instruments, personal contacts and knowledge are used to successfully develop regional land resource management further, then the project will have achieved a most desirable outcome.

The DIAMONT database - a lasting project result - ifuplan

The DIAMONT project has collected a huge amount of information. For this information to be used, documented and further exploited, storage in a database is the only satisfying solution. To facilitate further use of project data, the design of an online database has therefore been part of the DIAMONT project work.

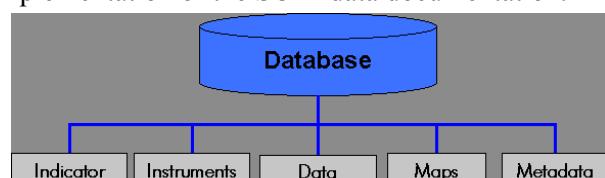
From the outset of DIAMONT, the Bavarian State Ministry for Environment, Health and Consumer Protection granted the project the hosting and programming of this database as an in-kind contribution. Due to this support, the results will be available online for the public until 2012 at www.diamond-database.eu once uploads and layout have been finalised.

To support the Alpine Convention, a link to the System for Observation of and Information on the Alps (SOIA) will be established. An introduction is already available at the web address given above.



Structure

The data base is structured in „classes“ which refer to central deliverables of the DIAMONT project. It also will provide documentation on the presented indicators, data and maps itself, called “metadata documentation”. The structure of this metadata meets the requirements of the ISO 19115 standard and the Dublin core standard. This structure takes advantage of previous work carried out in the Alpine Convention’s Working Group on „Environmental Objectives and Indicators“ and was closely coordinated with first steps undertaken for the implementation of the SOIA data documentation.



Classes of the DIAMONT data base

Content

Indicators

Indicators will be documented in the form of “fact sheets”, providing information on title and unit of the indicators. Additionally, the database describes

- idea and purpose of the indicator,
- indicandum, i.e. the main trends and the phenomena,
- calculation formulas used,
- possible data sources,
- and suggestions for an interpretation of the indicator.

DIAMONT Alpine Convention Indicators	
Indicator title	Indebtedness-by-revenues-ratio
Indicator purpose	Evaluation
Indicator formula	Total debt of municipality / total revenues of current year * 100
Indicator unit	%
	Indicator type 1) Status quo
Data origins	Debt and yearly revenue of the municipality (LAU2)
Maintrend	1) Local centres and fringes between competition and cooperation info
Pherionerion	Financial squeeze of the municipality
Editor	Andrian
Assessment	The higher the indicator value, the higher the risk of non-sustainable development.
Pillar	2) Economy
Dimension	EC-2) Public and private financing
Metadata date Stamp	2006-08-08
Contact	Bosch & Partner GmbH : Stefan , v. Andrian-Werburg
show hide	
Distributor Contact	Bosch & Partner GmbH
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Indicator fact sheet

Data

Data will be stored mainly as “result data”, which refers to data which has been produced in the DIAMONT project through data processing and formula calculation from raw data delivered by statistical agencies. This approach respects legal constraints and at the same time meets public demand for a high level of information as secured by the EU Directive on Access to Environmental Information.

STATEMENT	BUCODE	Municipality	Jobs in Public Administration	Jobs in Private Administration	Jobs in Trade
10605 1001000200 Fischenthalstein			0.015	0.310	0.14
10605 10010005 Marz			0.015	0.696	0.23
10605 10010006 Mittersburg			0.052	0.591	0.14
10613 10010013 Sieggraben			0.003	0.581	0.13
10615 10010015 Wiesen			0.045	0.445	0.17
10608 10010001 Mitterbach			0.055	0.364	0.12
10608 10010009 Losenstein			0.019	0.426	0.13
10612 10010012 Markt Sankt Martin			0.060	0.444	0.11
10617 10010017 Pfeffenhausen			0.043	0.391	0.13
10611 10010011 Marsendorf			0.000	0.452	0.24
10913 10010013 Markt Neuhofen			0.056	0.324	0.03
10924 10010023 Stadtschlaining			0.056	0.679	0.04
10308 10010020 Mitterberghofen			0.028	0.580	0.11
10505 10010036 Wieden bei Rechnitz			0.061	0.204	0.03
10527 10010052 Wiesfeld im Rechnitz			0.103	0.353	0.05
20101 10030010 Klagenfurt			0.124	0.693	0.18
20201 10030011 Villach			0.076	0.562	0.19
20202 10030020 Döbriach			0.062	0.462	0.12
20305 10030035 Henggau-Pressegger See			0.074	0.617	0.13
20308 10030036 Kirchbach			0.034	0.316	0.09
20307 10030037 Sankt Jakob im Rosental			0.034	0.314	0.13
20320 10030030 Sankt Stefan im Gailtal			0.097	0.626	0.16
20321 10030031 Lesachtal			0.069	0.427	0.09
20402 10030040 Ebenthal in Kärnten			0.039	0.387	0.06
20403 10030041 Sankt Veit an der Glan im Rosental			0.032	0.481	0.19
20405 10030045 Perchtach			0.081	0.452	0.14
20406 10030049 Grafenstein			0.041	0.449	0.14
20412 100300412 Keutschach am See			0.046	0.518	0.08
20413 100300413 Sankt Johann im Rosental			0.038	0.419	0.06
20415 100300415 Kramstorf am Wörther See			0.233	0.211	0.11
20416 100300416 Ludmannsdorf			0.029	0.293	0.05
20417 100300417 Maria Rain			0.033	0.507	0.14
20418 100300418 Maria Saal			0.025	0.600	0.42
20419 100300419 Sankt Veit an der Glan			0.029	0.591	0.29
20421 100300421 Moosburg			0.047	0.631	0.12
20424 100300424 Pörtschach am Wörther See			0.049	0.781	0.11
20425 100300425 Poggersdorf			0.032	0.556	0.12
20428 100300429 Sankt Margareten im Rosental			0.031	0.337	0.04

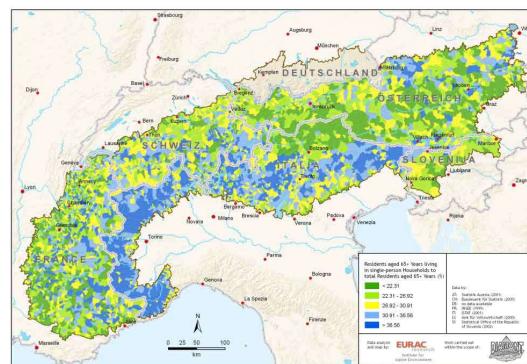
Indicator result data

The data are of course linked to geographical references and time periods. Thus search functions of the database will allow the selection of data for time periods or

geographical units. Further basic information on the data – such as origin, address of data authors, keywords - is contained in “metadata fact sheets”.

Maps

In the course of DIAMONT, result data have been linked to Geographic Information Systems, visualising the distribution of selected indicator characteristics across the Alps in maps.

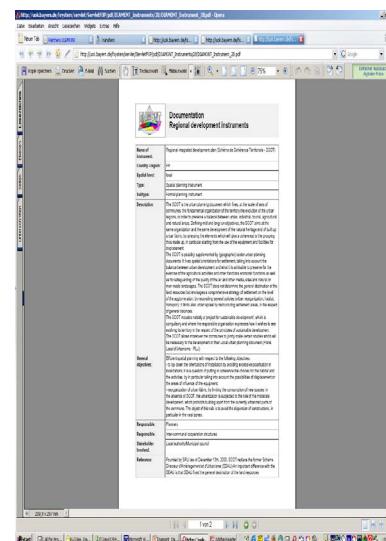


Sample map

These differentiated maps make information more tangible and reveal nexuses between geographical conditions and the respective subject. Subject to to legal arrangement with the publication law of the Alpine Atlas, selected maps will be provided via the data base as pdf or jpg files for on-screen viewing or download.

Instruments

The instruments for land resource management collected in DIAMONT are presented in the database including categories, key words and assessments. By selecting policy fields of interest, users will be able to identify relevant instruments for their specific purpose. All information on individual instruments can be downloaded as a pdf file.



Listing of instruments within the data base

Where available, best practice information and further links are attached to each instrument.

Status and final steps

So far the database has been used as a working tool within the DIAMONT partnership restricted to the project partners.

With the completion of the DIAMONT project the database will be made accessible for the public. Therefore within the last months of the DIAMONT project, the final version of data and maps will be uploaded to the database and the metadata documentation will be supplemented and established. The layout for public access will be designed, which makes the database more user-friendly than the working tool of the experts.

All partners who contributed in many ways to this important result of DIAMONT hope that this will be a lasting and useful result of our common project. Also the project team wishes to express their strong appreciation of the generous support by the Bavarian State Ministry for Environment, Health and Consumer Protection.

Indicator-based Characterisation of Urban Areas and Municipalities in the German Alpine area - Bosch & Partner

Within the framework of DIAMONT work package (WP) 7 indicators have been identified and developed that can be used to describe and display the fundamental issues of sustainable regional development in the Alps. The indicator development focused on the issue of urbanisation (cf. Folder WP7¹, DIAMONT Newsletter 7, 11/2006²). In this context WP7 proposed a total of 43 indicators allowing:

1. to detect where urbanisation occurs in the Alpine region,
2. to describe how urban areas are performing on a scale from dynamic to shrinking development,
3. to evaluate the consequences of urbanisation processes with respect to the objectives of sustainable development.

Indicator systems come alive when concrete data are used to calculate the indicator values for certain areas and suitable methods are applied for interpreting the results. But the necessary data to calculate many of the proposed indicators for the whole area of the Alpine convention are either incomplete or insufficiently comparable. This was one reason for using the German Alpine Convention area for a test run of the indicator system. Moreover, this sample region served to test the methods proposed for supporting the interpretation and presentation of the indicators selected in WP7.

The test run of the indicators concentrated on the first two questions mentioned above.

Where does urbanisation occur in the Alpine region? – Delimitation of urban areas in the German Alpine Convention area

As a rule, the municipalities in urban and urbanising areas are intensely interrelated and functionally interdependent. Thus it is not always recommendable to focus on the single municipality in these regions. In fact the regions as such must be thought of as spatial units to describe spatial developments and to work out perspectives and strategies of practical relevance.

Against this background DIAMONT used the concepts of urban areas and labour market regions respectively. In accordance with the definition of PERLIK³, the term

¹ http://www.uibk.ac.at/diamond/downloads/workpackages/folder_wp7_deutsch.pdf

² http://www.uibk.ac.at/diamond/downloads/newsletter/diamontnews_dt_november2006.pdf

³ Perlak M. 2001: Alpenstädte: Zwischen Metropolisierung und neuer Eigenständigkeit. Geographica Bernensia P83, Bern.

“urban areas” as used in WP7 comprises core cities and their surrounding municipalities. In this context core cities are municipalities of more than 10,000 inhabitants or more than 5,000 jobs. Depending on the intensity and direction of their commuting relations, surrounding municipalities are assigned to this core city. Applying the method for the German Alpine Convention area using current commuting matrices, we delimited 21 urban areas of rather different sizes. The largest of these urban areas is Rosenheim with 29 municipalities, whereas Buchloe and Miesbach, the smallest of the urban areas identified, only consist of two municipalities each.

According to this definition of urbanisation, only about 27% of all municipalities or 34% of the German Alpine Convention area are not involved in urbanisation processes. The situation in the German Alpine Convention area thus differs from that in other Alpine countries, where urbanisation is still more limited spatially. The influence of the metropolitan region of Munich largely extends into the German Alpine area, shapes its structures and cuts across existing local developments. This leads to the emergence of commuter chains. Towns such as Wolfratshausen, which are connected to the suburban railway system of Munich, offer urban structures of their own and take on an important employment function for the surrounding municipalities. At the same time, these towns and their adjacent municipalities are also the place of residence for people employed in the metropolitan region of Munich, where a substantial share of the local population commutes to.

Is the development of urban areas and municipalities in the German Alpine Convention area dynamic or shrinking? – An attempt to describe development types

16 indicators in the fields of demographic development, labour market, structure of economic branches, municipal finances and election behaviour were used to describe the urban areas and municipalities with respect to the dynamics of their development. For this purpose cluster analyses⁴ were carried out.

Using cluster analysis, we distinguished seven development types for the urban areas. (cf. Fig. 1).

To obtain a better picture of the differences and characteristics relevant for the creation of the clusters, the standardised mean indicators values of the different cluster types were comparatively displayed in so-called “Main Trend Images” (cf. Fig. 2). According to the

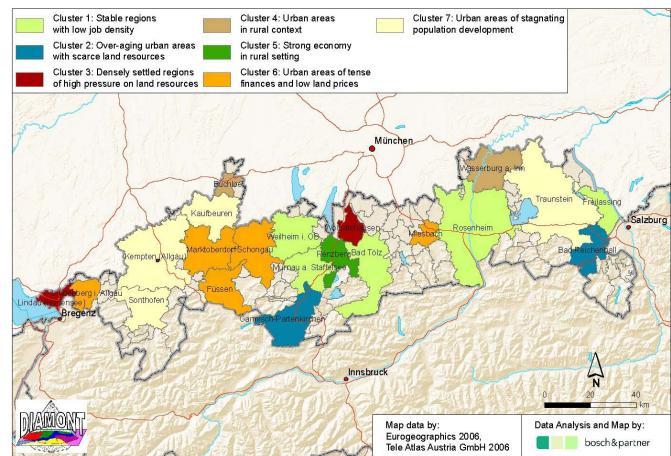


Fig. 1: Categorisation of urban areas in the German Alpine Convention area

hypothesis underlying the indicator development and interpretation, higher values here represent a more dynamic development. The Main Trend Images plus the detailed indicator values were used as the basis for describing and interpreting the clusters.

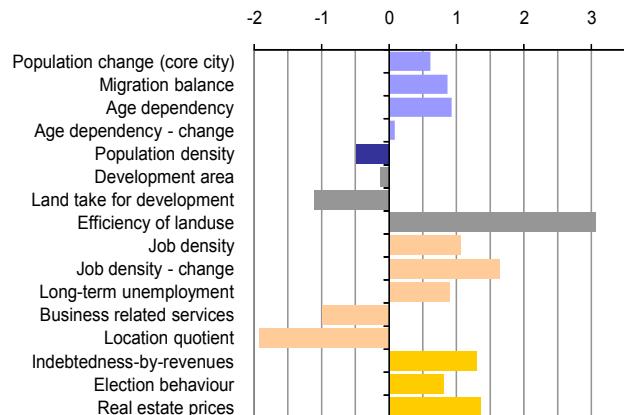


Fig. 2: Main Trend Image for Cluster 5 – Penzberg

The distribution of the different types of urban areas clearly follows certain principles. The metropolitan region of Munich exerts a considerable influence on the urban areas from Rosenheim to Weilheim i. O.. Here many dormitory villages are located: the population enjoys the advantages of life in a rural setting while commuting to work to nearby local labour market centres or even directly into the metropolitan region of Munich. Other municipalities are sought-after locations for amenity migrants as the municipalities combine attractive landscapes with the proximity to a town or city. As job density is rather low in both types of municipalities, this also characterises these urban areas as such. In Wolfratshausen, the strong influence of Munich manifests itself in a high demand for building land, even though the region is already very densely settled. Lindau finds itself in a similar situation, but with spatial reference to the agglomeration of Bregenz across the border with Austria.

⁴ The cluster analyses that form the basis for the map presentations were carried out by and analysed with the Statistical Consulting Laboratory of the Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich (Prof. Dr. Helmut Küchenhoff, Jan Ulbricht, Marie Standl, Stefanie Rubenbauer)

Issues of demographic shift most strongly appear in the two urban areas in the southern part of the investigated area. In Garmisch-Partenkirchen and Bad Reichenhall a high proportion of residents have already exceeded the retirement age of 65 years. Owing to an in-migration of elderly people, this share continues to increase.

The urban areas further away from the metropolitan region of Munich often show a stronger urban-rural gradient between the core and the hinterland. These regions face different problem complexes such as a tense financial situation, a weak labour market or a unfavourable demographic development.

The most remarkable signs of a dynamic development were detected for the urban area of Penzberg. Although bearing some rather rural characteristics, Penzberg, being the location of enterprises of high return on investment, has a strong economic position. As a consequence, population figures and employment are developing positively.

A more detailed analysis shows that municipalities within one urban area can take very different development paths. Clustering the municipalities can support the interpretation of the clustering on urban areas and contribute to answer the question if and how municipalities within urban areas differ from those outside. The cluster analysis on the municipal level was carried out using indicators comparable to those used for the cluster analysis of the urban areas.

At municipal level, the principles of spatial distribution, which were already visible at the level of urban areas, emerge in even more detail. Many commuter municipalities and a higher concentration of prospering towns can be found in the sphere of influence of the metropolitan region of Munich. The municipalities in attractive landscape settings at the Alpine rim and at lake Chiemsee are the preferred destination of many amenity migrants. Job density is rather low and the signs of the demographic shift are most visible.

The situation of many rural municipalities in the Allgäu is rather worrying. The population figures are increasing lightly, yet the provision of jobs is rather low and decreasing. The tense financial situation of many municipalities limits the options for providing impulses for economic development.

Brochure on the German Alpine Convention area

Using a theory-driven approach DIAMONT WP7 developed indicators for sustainable regional development. Despite some difficulties concerning data availability, the indicators proved suitable for describing local developments in the test run within the German Alpine Convention area.

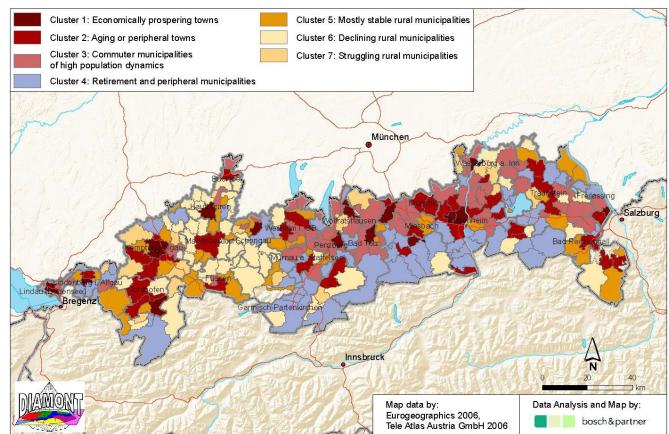


Fig. 3: Categorisation of municipalities in the German Alpine Convention area

Beyond the synthesising results displayed above, a series of further analyses were carried out within the framework of DIAMONT, describing the developments of the municipalities in the German Alpine Convention area in more detail. But in many cases local knowledge is necessary to substantiate the figures and indicator values calculated, and to explain causes and backgrounds. For instance, do necessary measures of flood protection (over-)stress the municipal budget? Have recently opened additional retirement and nursing homes contributed to increasing the share of elderly people in a municipality? We will pursue these and other questions and present a selection of detailed results for the German Alpine Convention area in the brochure „Fitness-Check deutscher Alpenraum – Herausforderungen für eine nachhaltige Regionalentwicklung“ (Fitness check for the German Alpine Convention area – challenges for sustainable regional development) due out in March 2008.

WP 10/11 RESULTS SUMMARY

- AMGI / UNCEM

The main aims of WPs 10/11 were implementing a participation process in selected test regions, including a bottom-up approach in order to assess the instruments identified as suitable to steer development, and particularly land resource management, towards sustainability. Special care was devoted, by applying the same participatory approach, to seeking appropriate solutions to problems detected in these regions. With such an approach, local populations' needs could be better assessed and instruments identified that best fit the specific situation of the individual test regions.

The Alpine space is marked by great diversity. This is reflected not only in different living conditions, habits, and traditions, but also in problems. Although basic difficulties are shared by Alpine regions, such as poor accessibility and lack of building land, each region faces its own development problems and these must be tackled by taking into consideration the specific conditions of the region. At the same time, each region should be treated without neglecting the broad Alpine perspective. Transnational knowledge of problems and solutions is therefore needed to enable balanced development across the entire Alpine area.

According to recent concepts, the main potential for sustainable regional development should be sought in the region itself, starting with human, social, and environmental capital, followed by tacit knowledge, institutional innovation and flexibility, regional identity and interpersonal contacts. Not only should local/regional potential be used, but local/regional ideas, expectations and initiatives must also be respected in order to attain harmonized development and avoid further centralization on the one hand, and marginalization and depopulation on the other. These concepts were clearly confirmed during the workshops: using all types of local assets has emerged as crucial to gaining in competitiveness and attractiveness and foster development in a sustainable manner.

For example, within the workshops regional stakeholders expressed their opinions, intensified their interpersonal relations and so a fruitful learning process got under way to promote and apply sustainable solutions to regional problems. For instance, in Sonthofen/Immenstadt the participants decided to establish a regional development working group, which could be understood as an expression of interest in steering development in the longer term. In other regions too, serious attempts towards joint governance were started.

Together with local initiatives, interregional cooperation should also be established, based on exchange of knowledge and, if possible, also on common actions, especially in regions where problems are shared and can be effectively solved through cooperation between local and transnational actors.

For this reason, the DIAMONT project sought an adequate response from the selected communities on the instruments and tools developed within the project, being well aware of the fact that all research is limited if not verified and tested in real situations. The juxtaposition of research-based knowledge with the needs and opinions of local stakeholders has also helped local communities identify their problems and seek opportunities for solving them. In addition, not only were local impulses given, but interregional comparison and exchange were also enabled. The planned workshops were held in five different countries and six different regions, additionally, a transnational database was prepared, containing over 100 entries on instruments and best practice examples. It is available in the participating countries and regions and it provides a set of instruments for steering development and land resource management. From this database, DIAMONT moderation teams selected some tools to submit to stakeholder scrutiny during the workshops; besides, test regions' stakeholders claimed they are eagerly awaiting the imminent planned opening of the database to public access.

It is satisfying to notice that the participation process has resulted in free discussion and promising prospects of cooperation between local stakeholders towards one crucial aim – to improve the situation in the regions and enable further development. In this way, local dynamics can be strengthened, some new ideas have emerged and – through DIAMONT expert research findings – exchange of transnational knowledge has started. For all these reasons, DIAMONT workshops have proved successful, enhancing learning processes in the regions and among the regions. In the end, we believe that DIAMONT can be regarded as a good example of the bottom-up approach, especially if workshop results and envisaged follow-ups can find further application and additional concrete actions are performed in the test regions and similar Alpine contexts.

COST Strategic Conference

7-9 April 2008 in Innsbruck, Austria

Global change and sustainable development in mountain regions

The workshop identifies the implications of climate and socioeconomic change for current and future forms of land use. First, we want to assess the impact on selected ecosystem services such as hazard protection, recreation, and natural resources. Secondly, we want to appraise scenarios of change and their implication for societies that depend on these ecosystem services. Although special emphasis is given to the Alps, other mountain systems are taken into account.

The objective of strategic workshops is to provide rationales and guidelines for funding agencies. This strategic workshop aims at putting research topics on mountain ecosystem services on their political agenda.

Info: <http://bfw.ac.at/rz/bfwcms.web?dok=6202>

AlpWeek

11-14 June 2008 in l'Argentière-la-Bessée, France

The subject will be Innovation in the Alps, which is essential for a viable and sustainable future for the region. The programme is divided into several sections, with conferences and discussion sessions run and chaired by the various partners of AlpWeek 2008. The social activities will include a number of excursions, exhibitions, cultural events and festivities designed to bring together the participants and the local population of the host region. The AlpWeek is a key event for sustainable development in the Alps. It unites the French, Italian, Swiss, German, Austrian, Slovenian and Liechtenstein actors of all the big networks for Alpine research (ISCAR), the municipalities (Alliance in the Alps), NGOs (CIPRA), protected areas (ALPARC) and the Alpine Clubs (CAA).

Info: <http://www.alpweek.org/2008/e/index.php?>

Internationale Final Conference ClimChalp

12th of March 2008

With the participation of the Alpine countries Austria, Slovenia, Italy, Liechtenstein, Switzerland, France and Germany, climate change in the Alps and its impacts on natural hazards, spatial planning and economy have been investigated and adaptation strategies proposed. The project was co-funded by the INTERREG IIIB Alpine Space Programme.

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

Organiser: Bavarian State Ministry for the Environment, Health and Consumer Protection

Co-organiser: Alpine Research Institute Garmisch-Partenkirchen

diamont calendar

End of June 2008: Submission of the 7th progress report and of the final report at the MA /JTS

7th accounting period in DIAMONT: September 2007 - March 2008

web-site

The DIAMONT web-site provides up-to-date information on the project.

<http://diamont.uibk.ac.at> <http://diamont.uibk.ac.at>

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