ESPON

EUROPEAN SPATIAL PLANNING OBSERVATION NETWORK

ESPON

ECPs Transnational Networking Activities

MONTESPON

International Seminar
on Mountainous Areas in Europe
Synthesis Report (2006)

Co-financed by the European Community through the Interreg III ESPON Programme

MONTESPON

ECP Transnational Networking Activity
(2006)

This report represents the final results of the ECP Transnational Networking Activity “MONTESPON”, conducted within the framework of the ESPON 2000-2006 programme, partly financed through the INTERREG programme.

The partnership behind the ESPON programme consists of the EU Commission and the Member States of the EU25, plus Norway and Switzerland. Each partner is represented in the ESPON Monitoring Committee.

This report does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the members of the Monitoring Committee.

Information on the ESPON programme, projects, and ESPON Contact Points Transnational activities can be found on www.espon.eu

The web site provides the possibility to download and examine the most recent documents produced by finalised and ongoing ESPON projects and ECP transnational activities.

This basic report exists only in an electronic version. It was released in December 2006 and is available online via www.espon.eu and www.espon.ch.

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Foreword

In 2002, Switzerland and Norway were invited to participate in the ESPON 2006 programme as full members. In the meantime, Swiss researchers have participated in several ESPON projects on European Spatial Development.

MONTESPON, financed by ESPON as an “ESPON Contact Points transnational networking activity”, was organized by the ECP of Switzerland (Lead Partner) and the ECPs of Norway, Sweden, Germany, Austria and Slovenia as Project Partners. The MONTESPON Seminar took place on the 5 & 6 September 2006 at Lucerne, Switzerland.

In the focus of the Seminar were the mountainous regions of Europe. The aim was to gain an overview on recent and current trends by using ESPON results, and thereby making ESPON and its results more widely known. Additionally, the Seminar tried to bridge the gap between ESPON and other, more local Interreg projects by bringing project representatives and researchers from both “spheres” together. The following report is providing a short overview of the aims and the context of the Seminar, summarizing the presentations held during the seminar as well as analyzing and reflecting the results and outcomes of the speeches, the workshops and the round table discussions.

Mountains require a common understanding in terms of sustainable spatial development, and this should be promoted actively by carrying out various activities and measures. We have to find efficient solutions in the domains of accessibility and transportation by promoting sustainable modes of transport and communication in order to safeguard the diversity of the natural and cultural heritage and to protect the population and infrastructure from natural hazards by the development of common tools as well as the exchange of methods and information. Integrating the mountain issue into the actual territorial discussions is therefore surely an issue of great importance for a large part of the European territory.

Last but not least, it is important to say that this was the first time since 2002 that Switzerland – being an ESPON full member, but as a Partner State and not an EU State – was organizing an ESPON activity as a Lead Partner. This fact can certainly be considered as a very positive and important milestone.

The positive feedbacks (an analysis of the feedback forms can be found in the Annex) showed us that it was well worth the effort to organize this Seminar. The project team would like to thank all the persons and institutions who supported us to prepare MONTESPON, who contributed during the Seminar and / or helped us implementing this report.

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Summary

Background, aims and structure of the Seminar

The MONTESPON Seminar was a so-called “ESPON Contact Points transnational networking activity“ and took place at Lucerne, Switzerland, on 5 and 6 September 2006. MONTESPON was organized by a project team led by ECP Switzerland and the ECPs of Norway, Sweden, Germany, Austria and Slovenia as project partners.

The main aims of the Seminar were to disseminate ESPON findings to the research community, exchanging ideas with regional and local Interreg-projects dealing with „mountain topics“ and to foster greater understanding of the specific development challenges in the mountainous regions. The Seminar was organized alongside 6 topics: demography, transportation / accessibility, provision with goods and services, natural hazards / landscape, economy and governance.

Data and scale issues

MONTESPON underscored the huge and even growing request for reliable, comparable and small-scale data. The pioneering role of ESPON was widely acknowledged. But ESPON has – so far – not been an instrument for detailed regional studies. So it came as no big surprise that in most cases the European-wide ESPON results can not give satisfying answers to the specific challenges of mountain regions. All in all, the impression dominated that this gap can and will be bridged.

Selected findings

Regional differences between the European mountain regions seem to be influenced by national patterns. National specifications (e.g. laws) but also the spatial structure of the surrounding areas (vicinity of big cities etc.) influence the situation of the different mountain massifs in Europe.

Demography shows a mixed picture: the most recent situation/development is not bad, but structural depopulation could become a problem in the future, as some indicators are showing. Regional Development policy must and can address these challenges by streamlining public policies towards sustainable spatial development. Interreg projects like PUSEMOR (and the Leader programme) aim at developing sustainable strategies and innovative solutions for improving the provision with public services.

Increased accessibility (e.g. the TEN projects) seems on a macro-scale to benefit the central mountain areas. On the more local level, it is important to

improve the accessibility to necessary services as well as access to new technologies (e.g. broadband). Economically, mountain areas have much resemblances with other peripheral areas like islands etc. due to the limited labour market. Mountain-flatland interactions are increasingly important. In order to understand the complex interactions in mountain areas, more qualitative, actor-oriented approaches provide valuable insights.

Ecologically, the increasing spread of infrastructure and the fragmentation of natural and seminatural areas in mountain regions is concerning. Climate change will probably increase the intensity of natural hazards, southern mountain regions might be most affected. The risks are well known, but applicable methodologies and solutions for affected areas are highly demanded.

Governance in mountain regions follows much the same principles as anywhere, but the territorial capital, being a fundamental precondition, must be strengthened (brain drain, ageing, fragmentation and weak political influence, vulnerability of natural resources, infrastructure).

The quality of mountain areas lies to a huge degree in their natural heritage and diversity, which is an asset that has to be seen as an opportunity for development. Mountains could e.g. serve as models for sustainable development policies. These facts as well as other values associated with mountains must be more actively promoted, leading to a necessary heightened political awareness and probably to the building of a new common European Mountain paradigm.

Conclusions and look ahead

The Seminar helped to further spread ESPON results and brought two worlds together: ESPON and Mountains. Contacts between key players were established (ESPON, Alpine Convention, Euromontana …) and are continuing on a bilateral basis. Mutual learning between ESPON and Interreg projects was by nature limited during just two days of a Seminar, but the potential was clearly visible and MONTESPON only a first step. The idea was brought up to organize regional Seminars in different mountain massifs.

Much hope was triggered as regards the future ESPON programme (ESPON 2013). An approach that will focus more on spatial types (like e.g. mountain regions) would be very welcomed. Case studies on different mountain massifs could be elaborated, allowing to exchange best practices.

1 Intention and structure of the Seminar

1.1 MONTESPON – Intention, aims and expected results

MONTESPON was organized as a transnational thematic Seminar. The principal intentions were

- to disseminate ESPON findings to the research community and
- to bridge the gap between the transnational Interreg III B projects and
- to foster greater understanding of the specific development challenges in the mountainous regions.

The topics chosen comprised aspects of demography, transportation / accessibility, provision with goods and services, natural hazards / landscape, economy and governance.

The MONTESPON project team was convinced that a certain “sense of community” of the mountainous regions would support and facilitate the discussions about specific, clearly defined mountain-related topics.

The results from ESPON and Interreg should offer quite a good resource of solutions and best practises to confront challenges such as depopulation or reduction of public services etc., and the seminar will help to exploit this wealth of useful insights.

The Seminar was designed to act as “bridge” by presenting and discussing the ESPON findings as a base and to develop further understanding by discussing and by taking into account Interreg results on regional and even local levels.

It was clear that the Seminar should take into account the findings from the EC study on Mountain Regions (Nordregio, 2004).

Furthermore, the Seminar intended to contribute to the Promotion Strategy of the ESPON programme through a scientific debate between several actors. It seemed clear that this Seminar would even contribute to the preparation phase for the next programming period of the transnational cooperation within ESPON as well as within INTERREG.

The results of the seminar were expected to be twofold: Firstly and foremost it should contribute to a better understanding of the development trends in

the mountainous regions in Europe. This should happen by presenting and even combining the ESPON findings and Interreg project results to gather more details on a regional and local level, but also to gain awareness on the differences of the ongoing developments and seizing the opportunity to exchange ideas about the different situations, perspectives and interpretations of results.

Last but not least, a very important aim of the Seminar was to help disseminating ESPON results to a broader community of researchers and project partners in other transnational programmes. This will clearly help to make ESPON better known and more widely used within academia, public agencies and the private sector.

1.2 Structure of the Seminar

The Seminar started with a few welcoming addresses by the organizing Lead Partner and host (Swiss Federal Office for Spatial Development) to set the scene and highlighting the background and aims of the Seminar.

After an introduction of ESPON (by its director, Mr. Peter Mehlbye), the chair of the Seminar (Mr. Thomas Egger, from the Swiss Centre for Mountain regions, SAB) presented some first reflections on the usability of ESPON results.

The Seminar was then structured along six topics:

- Demography
- Social aspects and Public services
- Accessibility and Transport
- Economy
- Environment, landscape, natural hazards
- Governance

There were always two presentations foreseen per topic, followed by a thematic workshop session. The first of the two presentations focused on ESPON results, and the second presentation usually highlighted the topic from a practical project approach from the Interreg III B context.

The results of the workshops were afterwards taken back to the plenary by the Workshop Chairs. The debates were organised as workshops in order to allow an intense discussion about the (assumed) specificity of the different mountainous regions in Europe.

At the end of the Seminar, Mr. Bernard Debarbieux (University of Geneva) presented a broader overview. This was followed by a round table discussion and a brief conclusion presented by the Chair of the Seminar, Mr. Thomas Egger.

2 Presentations and Workshops

The Seminar started with a welcome address by Mrs. Yvonne Schärli-Gerig from the Department of Justice and Security of the Canton of Lucerne. The MONTESPON Seminar took place in the Grossratssaal, the parliament of the Canton of Lucerne, and provided a perfect location.

Mr. Thomas Egger (SAB) was chairing the two days of the Seminar.

NOTE: The majority of the texts in chapter 2 were written and compiled by the editors of this report, based on notes taken during the presentations and workshops. All texts were reviewed by the respective speakers and workshop chairs. The presentations are available online as PDF versions via www.espon.eu and www.espon.ch.

2.1 Introductory presentations of the Seminar

2.1.1 Welcome and Introduction

Pierre-Alain Rumley, Director of the Swiss Federal Office for Spatial Development (ARE), CH - Berne

Mr. Rumley was thanking the participants for coming to Lucerne. He mentioned the fact that Switzerland is usually associated with Mountains. This was underlined by a map showing that the mountains indeed cover about sixty percent of the Swiss territory. At the same time, Switzerland is a country with seven and a half million inhabitants. The majority of them (about 5 million people) lives where Switzerland is comparatively flat – on the Plateau, or Mittelland as it is called in German. The vast majority of workplaces is also located here.

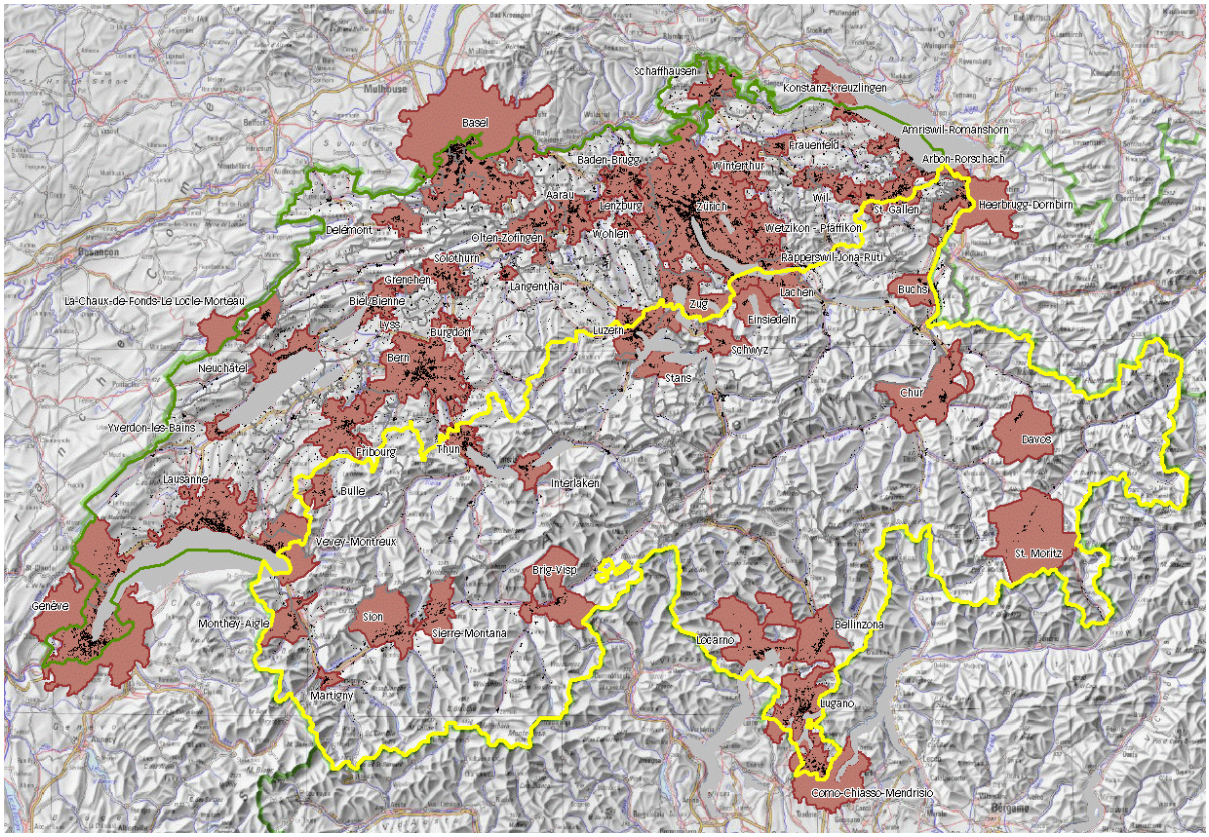
Although Switzerland is associated with mountains, there are no less than seventy-five percent of the Swiss population living in urban areas.

The Alps are not an empty space, and there are a few cities located in the mountainous part of Switzerland as well (see figure 1).

The diversity of the Alpine regions was documented by showing a few slides, e.g. from remote, glaciated areas, a tourist resort with golf courses, and quite a dispersed settlement structure.

Spatial Development strategies should try to maintain the diversity of these areas and to support the potentials of the specific mountainous areas. The sometimes remote and isolated mountain areas should – at least in most cases – remain a place to live and work, adequately equipped with public services. Spatial planning can improve security (for example, it should not be allowed to construct houses in areas endangered by natural hazards), but it can and must also maintain or improve the quality of the settlements. For example, second homes can become a problem, and the local population is now more and more against further development.

Figure 1 Switzerland: functional urban areas and the mountains (yellow border)



Source: ARE (brown area: the official Swiss Agglomerations; the yellow line is the border of the Alpine Convention, Swiss area shown only)

There are other challenges. The Alps are crossed by an important north-south axis, and this means that a lot of goods cross Switzerland and the Alps day per day. Some valleys have been transformed into corridors, and the

effects are not always welcome. To minimize the negative impacts, Switzerland is with great success implementing a policy to transport goods on rail – and not on the road.

This means investments in infrastructure. The New Railway Link through the Alps (NRLA) is currently under construction and will provide the necessary basis to strengthen the railroad system and relieve the valleys. Main features of this enormous project are the two new base tunnels of Loetschberg and Gotthard. The Gotthard Base Tunnel, ready for operation in 2016, will be 57 kilometers long.

On a last slide, Mr. Rumley showed an aerial picture of the resort city of St.Moritz, projecting the boundaries of the community and also the boundaries of the neighbouring villages. It is obvious that managing areas of such diversity is not easy and probably too expensive in many cases. Co-operation might be a solution, and in this context he mentioned the key word of “Governance”, a topic that would also be discussed later during the Seminar (day 2).

Mr. Rumley hoped that in the context of an ESPON 2013 there will be more room and opportunities for regional analyses and interpretations, focusing on selected target areas or spatial types. Seminars like MONTESPON are a good contribution on the way to achieve this goal.

2.1.2 Aims and structure of the Seminar

Marco Kellenberger, ESPON Contact Point Switzerland, Swiss Federal Office for Spatial Development (ARE), CH - Berne

We must always keep in mind how important – but also how difficult it is to break down macro-scale results to the local level. For example, the boundary between mountain area and flatland looks very good and appropriate if we look at it from Space. But if we are zooming in, things become much less evident. It is anyway unclear, if a correct line even exists, because the ideal location of the boundary always depends on the questions that stand behind these delimitations.

There are 26 regions or cantons in Switzerland, which makes the country almost a European Union on a smaller scale. Every canton is demanding a higher resolution, or a more local or targeted approach that is more consistent with its structure, be it economically, or regarding for example the special topographical situation. This balance between macro and meso or

micro level is not easy to achieve, and one can imagine how difficult it is to transform analyses and results – or maps – from a European to a national level, or even to the regional level.

The ESPON Contact Point Network – or ECP Network – is one key element to support this challenging task. There is an ESPON Contact Point in every ESPON country, sometimes there are universities involved, sometimes administrations. In Switzerland, the Federal Office for Spatial Development is designated as the ESPON Contact Point. The ESPON programme finances transnational activities initiated by at least three ECPs. These transnational activities are usually organized as Seminars or Workshops. The aim is to spread, discuss and further deepen ESPON results.

MONTESPON is one of these transnational activites, organized under the lead of ECP Switzerland, with the help of the following Project Partners: the ECPs from Norway, Sweden, Germany, Austria and Slovenia.

MONTESPON brings together people from many different fields. Many participants from Switzerland were involved, but also from other European countries, some are very familiar with ESPON, others are not. There are many bridges to cross. But also many opportunities for professional exchange. The Seminar tries to facilitate mutual learning between different actors dealing with mountain development.

Let's not forget one important fact: ESPON was designed to produce results for European policies and challenges. It is perfectly clear that ESPON usually can not – or at least until now could not – generate many results of local importance, at least not at first sight. The research was – mainly for data availability reasons – usually done on the NUTS3 level. NUTS3 is the cantons in Switzerland, and for many questions, this resolution is not sufficient, and the results may in many cases not be very useful. However, the current ESPON results make it possible for small regions to find or define more precisely their position, their challenges and opportunities within the current dynamics of European Spatial Development. So ESPON is first of all a strategic tool – not only for Europe, but also for the countries and regions that are involved. ESPON 2006 is only a first step, and it has surely laid the foundation for an ESPON 2013 which may allow a a more local, more targeted analytical approach.

2.1.3 The ESPON Programme – goals, main results and future

Peter Mehlbye, Director, ESPON Coordination Unit, LUX - Luxembourg

ESPON 2006 is a programme on spatial development of an enlarging European Union. The programme is running under the EU structural funds, Interreg III. It is carried through by the 25 EU member states and the European Commission. Norway and Switzerland are participating as full members in ESPON. The budget comprised 17.5 Million Euros.

Besides 33 applied research projects, there were many specific data projects and a lot of networking activities initiated by ESPON.

Main objectives and expectations:

- Improving comparable evidence on territorial dynamics and imbalances within Europe and its regions
- Supporting policy development / better perception and application of the European Spatial Development Perspective
- Spatial dimension in cohesion policy and other EU policies
- Bridging the gap between policy makers, administrators and scientists
- New information and knowledge on European territorial trends / Spatial scenarios for Europe
- Territorial impact assessment of EU policies
- Integrated concepts, indicators and tools
- A network of academics and a scientific platform for European territorial research

From the wealth of results, there are a few trends that can be observed: on one side, there are megatrends that influence spatial development (e.g. ageing population, migration, hazards/climate change, Energy prices, EU enlargement, global competition and market forces etc.). From a more regional perspective, the ESPON research results show that there is a rich regional diversity in Europe. Every region has a unique combination of potentials and challenges. It is possible – thanks to ESPON results – to position the regions in relation to other regions, understanding under-used potentials, assets and comparable advantages.

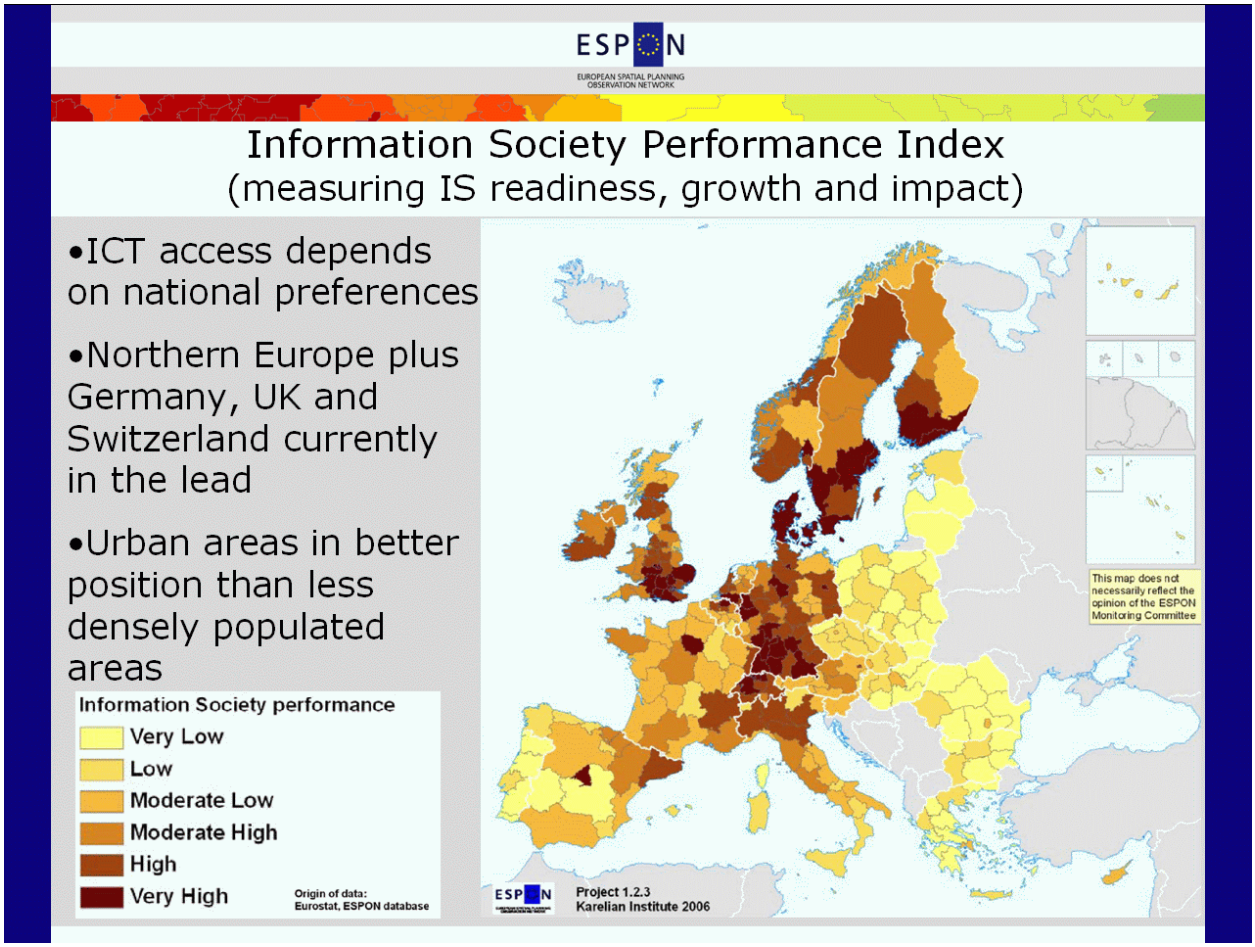
The territorial structure of Europe still shows the well-known “Pentagon” core area, but there are signs of an increasing importance of Metropolitan regions and corridors outside the core. Demography development shows a

highly fragmented pattern of declining and increasing regions. Generally, there is a population decline, but major urban (and retirement) areas are in a more favourable position. There were indentified roughly 1600 FUAs (functional urban areas) in Europe. These FUAs – key drivers for development – were analysed by 7 topics.

Other results presented from the ESPON 2006 programme comprised Research and Development, Accessibility and Economic Lisbon indicators.

The second part of the presentation offered some room for a view into the future: the ESPON 2013 programme. Key words in the European Spatial Development debate are “competitiveness” and “cohesion”. There will be a need for a stronger focus on potentials, hereby considering a larger territorial context and efficient governance structures. Cities and (larger) regions will have to focus on the following strategic objectives: competitiveness (using existing under-used assets), attractiveness (creating new assets) and liveability (ensuring quality of life for people and enterprises).

Figure 2 Information Society Performance Index



There is demand for ESPON results from many sides (e.g. structural funds 2007-2013, European territorial cooperation etc.).

Main priorities in the ESPON 2013 programme:

- Applied research on territorial development and cohesion: Evidence on territorial trends, perspectives and policy impacts
- Targeted analysis based on user demand: European perspective to the development of different types of territories
- Scientific platform and tools: Comparable regional data, analytical tools and scientific support
- Awareness raising, empowerment and involvement: Capacity building, dialogue and networking
- Communication and technical/analytical assistance

The programme is scheduled to be submitted to the European Commission in Autumn 2006 for approval. It should start on 1 January 2007. The Budget will be 40-45 Million Euros.

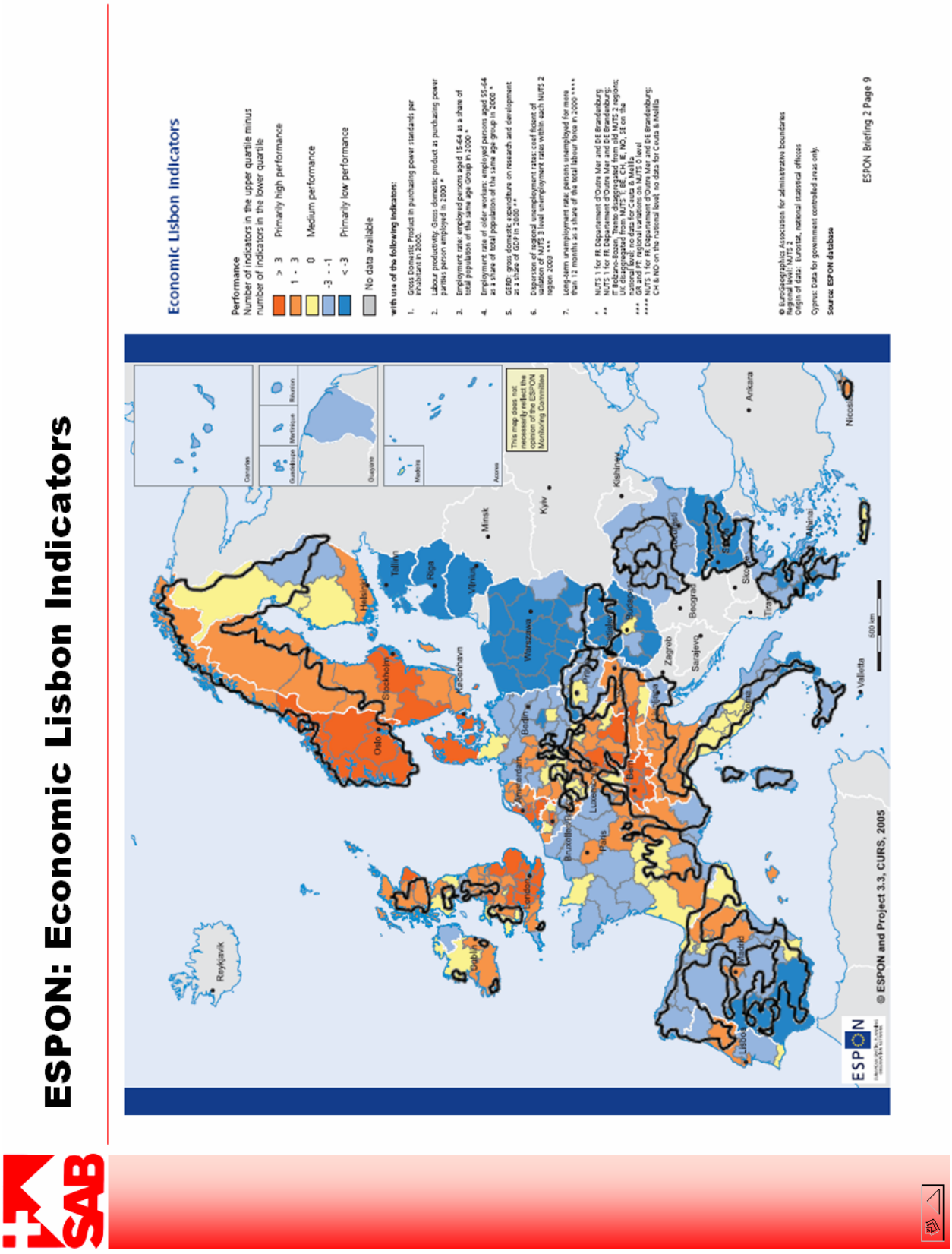
2.1.4 Mountain regions in Europe – from the Point of view of ESPON

Thomas Egger, Swiss Centre for Mountain regions (SAB), CH - Berne

Is there a mountain specific approach in ESPON? The answer is quite simple: No. The main aim of ESPON was to deliver statistical data for European policies and challenges. Until the publication of the Nordregio study in 2004 (see chapter 2.5.1) and the integration of mountains in the new European treaty, mountain areas were not areas of special interest to European policy. They were part of the cohesion policy, CAP and other policies but not a thematic focus of their own. Thus, it can not be surprising that ESPON did not especially investigate mountain areas in its first phase of 2000 – 2006. Furthermore, ESPON was not designed to deliver answers to local and regional challenges.

A superposition of ESPON-maps with mountain areas as defined by the Nordregio study clearly shows that ESPON in its present stage cannot deliver any mountain specific answers.

Figure 3 Lisbon indicators and the mountainous areas of Europe



Source: ESPON Briefing 2 (www.espon.eu), mountain boundaries by ARE (based on Nordregio 2004)

The map on Lisbon indicators (explanation: see box at end of text) e.g. shows a very varied image. While mountain areas in central and northern Europe show a good economic performance, mountain areas in the southern periphery are rated as of poor economic performance. But even within massifs, there can be great differences as is highlighted by the alpine arc. Here we're confronted with the question of scale. ESPON is dealing with statistical entities largely on the NUTS2 or NUTS3 level. This NUTS2/3 level does not necessarily correspond to mountain areas, as mountain ranges do not always follow political borders.

ESPON has – due to the reasons given above – not produced results focused on mountain areas. It is therefore interesting to compare the ESPON-approach with other approaches. The Nordregio-study has produced considerable results for mountain regions on the municipal level. Nordregio used a greater resolution for it's study. But the delimitation of Nordregio, which is based on physical and climatic criteria leads to other questions. In the particular case of Switzerland, 93% of the Swiss territory would be classified as mountain areas, including the metropolitan area of Zurich. This is in strong contrast to the Swiss understanding of mountain areas, where only about two thirds of the territory are considered as mountainous.

Mountain areas can not be de-coupled from their surroundings. It is very important to analyse mountain areas taking in respect their linkages to the metropolitan areas. In this respect, the approach for the delimitation of the Interreg IIIB-Alpine Space programme deserves special attention. Because here, this approach of integrating the surrounding areas was successfully implemented. Therewith, the perimeter of the Alpine space programme is even larger than the perimeter of the Alpine Convention, to which the Alpine space programme is related.

For the future, the ESPON 2013 programme was recommended to integrate the following aspects:

- Integrate a mountain approach into ESPON. This must necessarily be done on a municipal level.

- Search for a convergence between work done in ESPON and work in other programmes (above all the future Interreg-programmes but also institutional approaches such as the alpine and the Carpathian Convention)

- Launch ESPON projects responding more to the needs of the decision makers in mountain areas. Institutions like the two Conventions cited above but also actors from the civil society representing mountain areas such as Euromontana can be privileged partners in this respect.

(Economic) Lisbon Indicators

With the renewed Lisbon agenda, the EU aims to improve its competitiveness and to become the world's leading knowledge-based economy. ESPON project 3.3 (Territorial dimension of the Lisbon/Gothenburg Process) developed a set of indicators for measuring the success of the strategy. Based on a larger set of indicators, a short list of 14 indicators has been developed. In the ESPON analysis, seven out of these 14 indicators have been merged into one combined indicator. For the remaining seven indicators, regionalised data is not available currently. Thus, the analysis of the regionalised Lisbon indicators is focused on economic indicators and does not take into account all aspects of the Lisbon short list, e.g. no environmental indicators could be included.

The seven indicators are: (1) GDP/capita, (2) GDP/employed person, (3) Employment rate, (4) Employment rate of older workers, (5) Gross domestic expenditure on R&D, (6) Dispersion of regional (un)employment rates, and (7) Longterm unemployment rate.

2.2 Demography

2.2.1 Demographic change in mountain regions – evidences from ESPON projects

Mats Johansson, ESPON Contact Point Sweden, Lead Partner ESPON 1.1.4 (Demography), Division of Regional and Urban Studies, Royal Institute of Technology (KTH), SWE - Stockholm

Mr. Johansson presented several maps showing the population change in Europe and European mountain regions between 1990 and 2000. Roughly 30% of all ESPON-NUTS 3 areas are primarily mountainous. Two thirds of these mountainous NUTS 3 areas had a population increase, one third experienced a decrease. This figure (ratio) remains almost exactly identical if all NUTS 3 areas – covering the whole "ESPON territory" (29 countries) – are taken into account.

There is evidence of regional differences, influenced by the national patterns – peripheral mountainous regions are obviously in a worse situation.

The natural population change 95-2000 (births minus deaths) in mountain regions shows an increase in central areas (Alps), coastal Spain, coastal Norway and parts of Scotland. Decrease can generally be observed in northern and eastern Europe, Greece, inland parts of Spain, Portugal and Italy.

Migration balance (95-2000) on the other hand shows that mountainous areas are in a rather good position – the balance is positive for most areas, except northern Norway, Sweden and Finland as well as southern Italy.

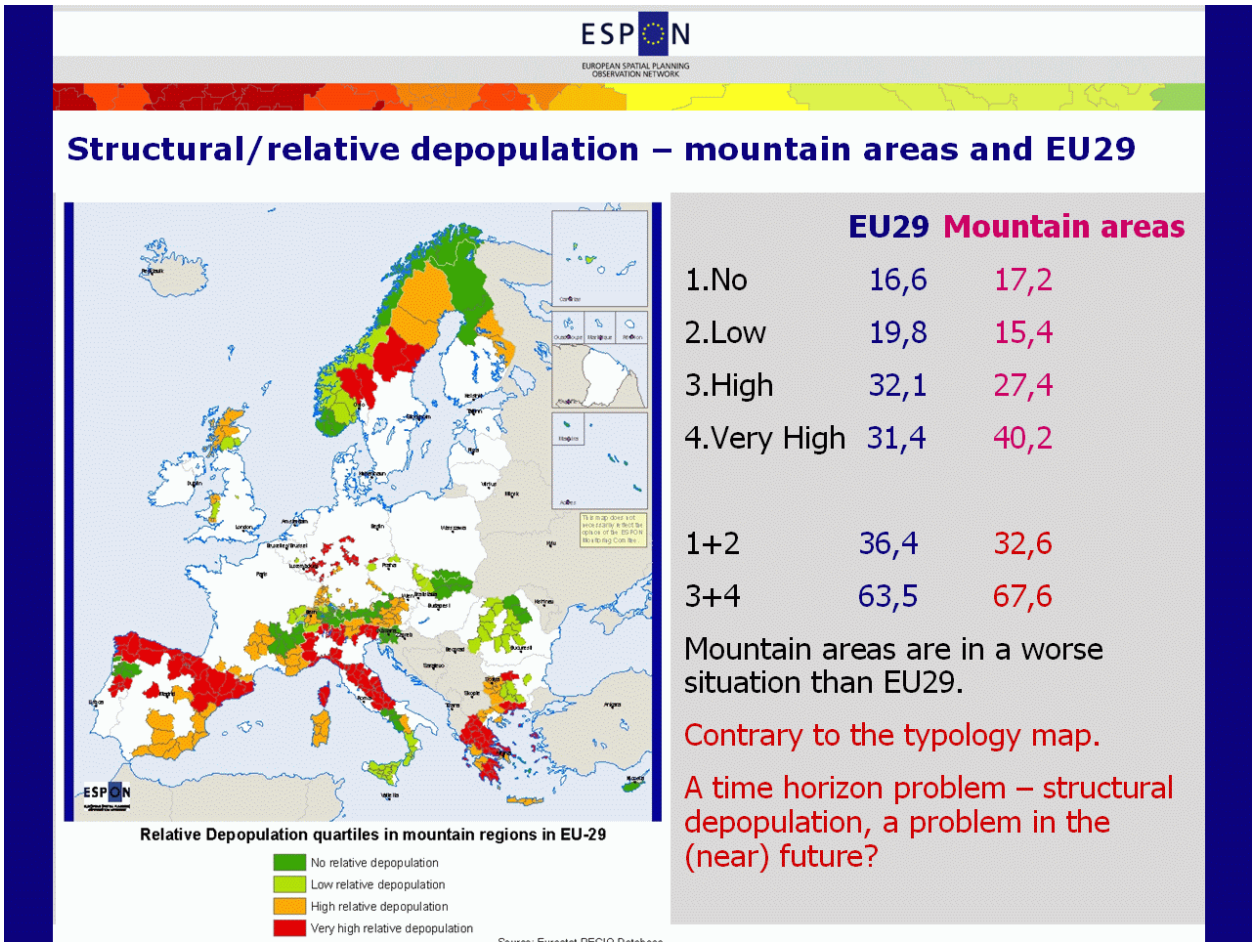
As regards sustainable demographic development, ESPON project 1.1.4 has developed a typology ranging from positive to negative. Result: mountainous areas are in a better position if compared to the whole area of the 29 ESPON countries.

Concerning the total fertility rate (TFR, explanation at end of text) and the ageing phenomenon, the conclusion is that mountain regions usually are in line with the respective national figures. Differences in TFR are dependent of national levels and traditions – not of differences between mountain areas and lowland areas or mountain areas and urban areas (many urban areas are also mountain areas).
If the development is analysed for structural / relative depopulation (estimated by a combination of depopulation factors, see explanation at end of text), the image is different from the previous one: mountains are in a

worse position than the overall development. This might be a time-lag issue – in other words: structural depopulation could become a problem in the future.

A general conclusion: the mountain areas are first of all mirrors of the situation in the nations where they belong. But: the analyses presented is based on figures on NUTS 3 level – NUTS 4 and NUTS 5 would perhaps tell another story.

Figure 4 Structural / relative depopulation in Mountain Regions



Source: ESPON project 1.1.4 (www.espon.eu)

Total fertility rate (TFR)

The total fertility rate is a theoretical measure and is defined as the number of births related to the number of women in the childbearing ages and is standardised for variances in cohort sizes. The TFR estimates the number of children a cohort of 1,000 women would bear if they all went through their childbearing years exposed to the age-specific birth rates in effect for a particular time. This measure differs thus from the crude birth rate (CBR) that is defined as the number of births per thousands of total population.

Structural / relative depopulation

In order to investigate the degree of "structural or relative depopulation", ESPON project 1.1.4 (Demography) used an estimate consisting of five indirect indicators. These five indirect indicators are: (1 & 2) the share of children and elderly people in the population, (3) post-active dependency ratio, (4) the ratio of young people to elderly people, and (5) the indicator of an ageing labour force.

2.2.2 The new Rural and Regional Development Policy of the Norwegian Government

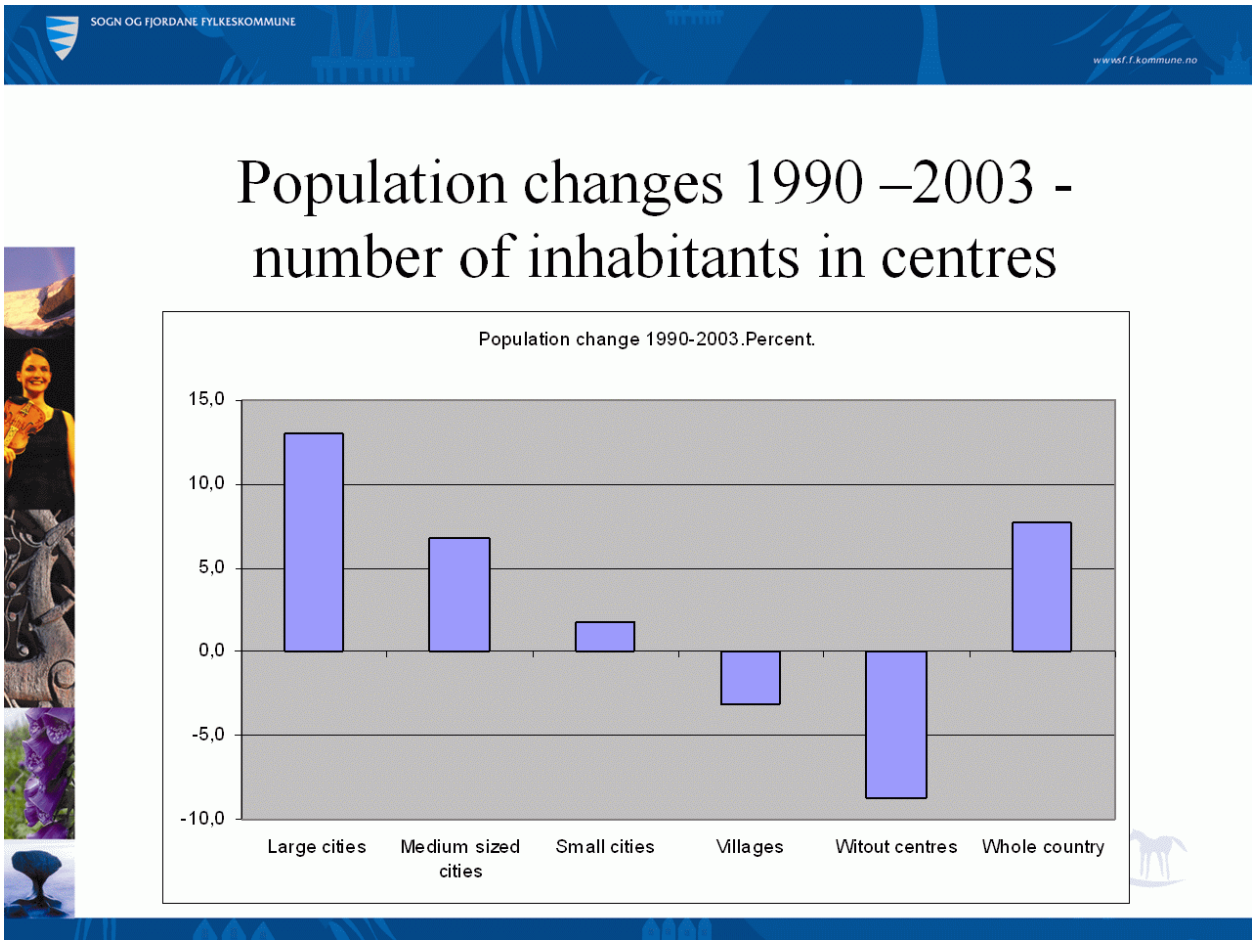
Tor Bremer, Vice Chairman of Sogn og Fjordane County, Norway

The main title of Mr. Bremer's presentation was "Wholeharted concern for all of Norway". If taking a look at the population development from 1990-2003, there is a clear picture: the bigger cities and centres are gaining, the small villages and rural areas are loosing population. Sogn og Fjordane (pop. 107'000) is considered a mountain region, and it is sparsely populated (6 pers. per Sq. Km). From 1990-2003, there was a general loss of population, with a trend towards the central areas.

Norway promotes an active strategy towards the rural districts, because of the "costs of centralization":

- Diminished freedom of choice where to live
- Reduced social and cultural diversity
- Experiencing increased pressure in urban areas
- Welfare in rural areas will have high cost
- Difficulty in exploiting natural resources and labour skills
- Norway has hosted a rurally based culture for hundreds of years. Great cultural and social values in infrastructure and buildings.

Figure 5 Population Change in Norway 1990-2003



There is a unified effort needed to address these challenges. Public sector policies must have a spatial dimension.The new governmental council has to secure common policies in urban and rural development and in public sector policies. Last but not least, new central government activities should be located outside Oslo. Further strengthening the municipal incomes (general purpose grants) will enable a better and more equal provision of services to the public, making living in rural areas better urban settlements more attractive.

There are other support and aid possibilities: e.g. regionally differentiated social security contributions paid by the employers, more areas eligible for regional investment aid, as well as a focus on enterpreneurship (increasing the number of entrepreneurs by supporting entrepreneurship education, supporting new businesses, reducing the barriers for youth, women and immigrants who wish to start their own business, direct support for small businesses concerning running costs during the first years of operation, giving priority to Community funding via the County council and enhance

cooperation between local communities on business development). There is also an extra effort in developing rural-based industries (creative industry production, travel, agriculture, economic development around National Parks, fisheries and aquaculture, oil industry in the north of Norway, alternative energy).

Attractive urban settlements as well as suitable and well-developed communication and basic infrastructure as well as a multi-modal transport infrastructure are key to local development.

Finally, special restructuring support is provided for municipalities and regions that have a narrow industrial base and that face particularly large restructuring challenges.

2.2.3 Workshop 1: Demography

Chaired by Olaf Foss, ESPON Contact Point Norway

The discussion was structured along the following three main points:

1. There seems to be no less variation in socio-demographic and other important territorial characteristics among "mountain regions" than among European regions in general. There seems to be more variation among mountain regions than between mountain regions in average and other European regions in average. What are the major types of "mountain regions" according to demographic/socio-demographic aspects? What are the most important preconditions of the very different patterns of demographic situation and what explains the variation in demographic situation? Several factors were mentioned in the discussion, like whether mountain regions are part of national peripheries, population density, demographic history, the presence of (adjacent) larger cities/functional urban areas, historical factors, topographical and climatic factors etc.). It is not very fruitful to treat mountain regions as one category of regions. Can there be identified some common traits and challenges related to the demographic situation? The Scandinavian mountain regions stand out by their (sometimes) extreme peripheral location, extremely low population densities, very small-scale settlements, huge distances, in combination with harsh climates etc. Depopulation and ageing is a strong trend.

2. Which are the challenges (problems and opportunities) related to the different patterns types of "mountain region demography". The discussion was rather concentrated on Scandinavian/North-Western European

perspectives (cf. 1). There was a notion that peripherality/low density/long distances/lack of larger cities, rather than the mountainous location itself, is the real problem. Some opportunities were also touched upon (mountain farming, typical mountain products, tourism, critical mass/innovation and restructuring capacity).

3. Political responses/strategies. The discussion of policies seemed to point to the need for more detailed territorial information. Mountain region development should focus on and be targeted towards small areas/small settlements. NUTS 5 is more relevant. Focus on places/settlements, small and medium sized towns, place development strategies, local initiatives. Mountain areas are to be found within regions (NUTS 3) containing both mountain areas and non-mountain areas. The variations within regions are often substantial. NUTS 3-demography tells very little about mountain area demography.

Other keywords of the discussion:

- a predominant trend of overaging (need for health care)
- the problem to attract younger people
- no big cities in the mountain regions
- a brain drain effect (sometimes also called ”hillbilly-ization”)
- The solution lies maybe at the very beginning of the depopulation process, and mountainous areas should take care to stop the brain drain whenever possible. It is much more difficult to reattract population, to reverse this process. Young people who leave don’t come back.
- The historically grown settlement patterns should be preserved.
- Mountains add to the variety of landscapes, mountains are a “cultural asset”
- general challenge: in smaller villages, new and innovative ideas are sometimes not popular.

2.3 Social Aspects and Public Services

2.3.1 Social aspects of territorial development in mountain regions – evidences from ESPON projects

Bernd Schuh, Austrian Institute for Regional Studies and Spatial Planning ÖIR, Lead Partner of ESPON Study 1.4.1 (Small and medium sized Towns) and ESPON study 1.4.2 (Social aspects)

Social structures and social aspects are a very wide and complex field – as well as the development of Mountain regions in Europe. However we agree that the provision with social services and infrastructures, the social capital and actual socio-demographic trends are key-factors to understand the development of a (mountain) region.

Two projects of the ESPON Programme (ESPON 1.4.1 Small and Medium Sized Towns and ESPON 1.4.2 Social Aspects of territorial development in EU) were presented. Some results of these projects:

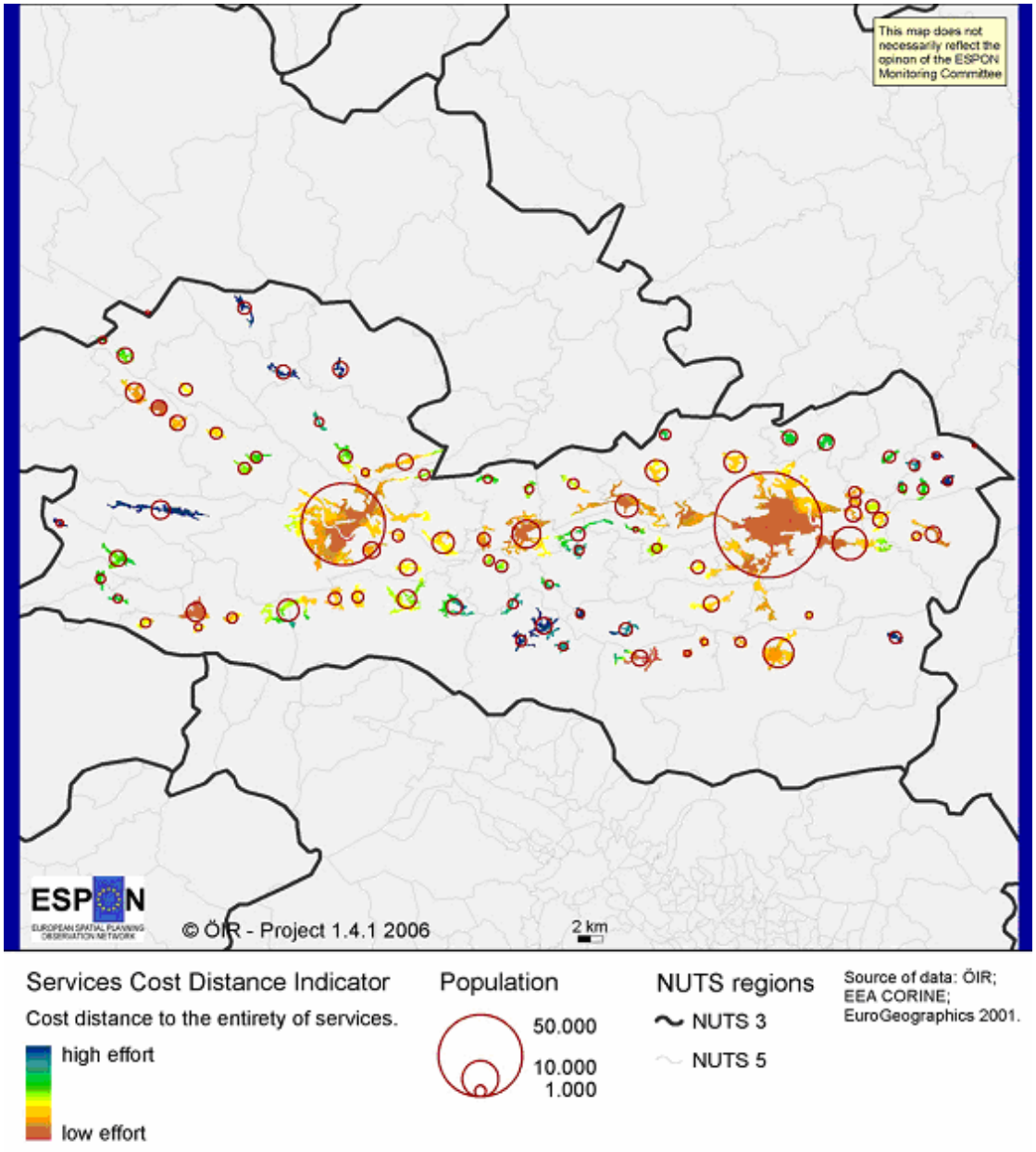
- The number of hospital beds per inhabitant as well as the number of licensed physicians in a region depends from various factors, esp. from the national systems of health care, the wealth of a region and the density of population. But there is no evidence that topography has an influence. The above mentioned two indicators only show (more or less accurate) the quality of a health care system. They do not give any information about the healthiness of a regional society and the quality of a (national) health policy for prevention.
- Another topic analysed in ESPON are the relations between employment and level of education of population. Here also the dependencies are not very clear, because many factors matter.
- Analyses on the NUTS 3 and NUTS 4 level in Southern Austria show the clear dependency between distance from a centre and costs of services: The population of small villages far away from medium and small service centres have to do a higher effort to reach these services (Services Cost Distance Indicator, see Figure 6 and explanation at end of text).

Conclusions (based on the mentioned ESPON-projects and other projects dealing with mountain regions):

- It is a matter of scale to detect facts / trends / interrelations between social aspects and the development of mountain regions ➔ the NUTS II level is here not very helpful.

- Social aspects rather depends on national systems than on topographic setting.
- Remote areas (as e.g. former border regions) are catching up and could leave mountain regions behind in terms of territorial development – is it for (spatial) policy easier to overcome the negative impacts of an ancient geopolitical border as the problems of remote mountain areas?

Figure 6 Services Cost Distance Indicator for settlement units in the Austrian NUTS 3 region Klagenfurt – Villach (ESPON 1.4.1 SMESTO)



Services Cost Distance Indicator

ESPON project 1.4.1 (The role of small and medium sized towns, SMESTO) used a road network weighted with average travelling speeds and then calculated the "cost distance" to reach each one of the following services/facilities: railway stations, general practitioners, medical specialists, hospitals, schools (all using point coordinates) and commercial areas (using the CORINE land cover dataset 2000). The methodology is explained in detail in annex A.3 of the 1.4.1 report.

There was only one model region analyzed (Austrian NUTS 3 region Klagenfurt-Villach).

2.3.2 Public services – new strategies to improve the provision of mountain regions

Ueli Stalder, Swiss Centre for Mountain regions SAB / Interreg III B Project PUSEMOR, CH – Berne

Public services (or more precisely: services of general economic interest SGEI) are an intensely discussed issue, on European level (white and green book, sectoral policy e.g. for transports or telecommunications) as well as on national, regional and local level. The attractiveness of a region as place for both, economic entreprises and residentials is strongly influenced by the quality of public infrastructures and services – the provision with public services is an important location factor (but of course not the only one).

Three important factors are influencing the provision with public services in general and the provision of sparsely populated mountain regions in particular:

- demografic change: aging of population (3rd and 4th age), other family structures, other roles for men and women...
- New technologies, esp. for Information and Communication (ICTs)
- other political and economic framework conditions (often discussed as globalisation, liberalisation, privatisation)

In this context, the Interreg III B Project PUSEMOR aims at developing sustainable strategies and innovative solutions for improving the provision of sparsely populated mountain regions with public services. This with the

ambition to up-grade these regions both as economic place and as place of residence.

PUSEMOR has partners from 6 alpine countries, organised in totally 9 so called regional teams with 2 – 4 test areas per team. It runs from January 05 to july 07 and first results are already available:

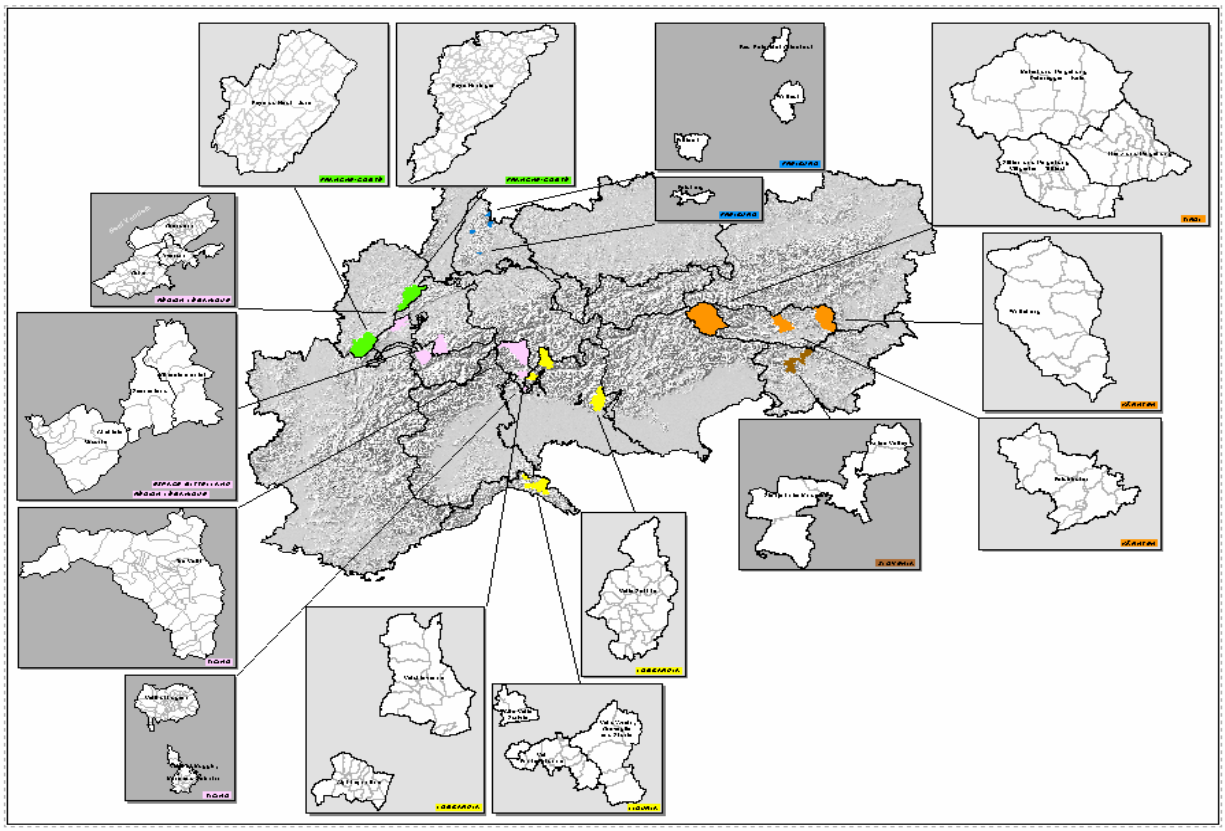
- In most of the test areas, population assess the quality of the following domains of public services as rather positive: Education / schools, public administration and daily needs.
- The domains (public) transport, telecommunication and health care / care for elderly are assessed as problematic or very problematic
- The situation is particularly difficult in regions with a loss of jobs and population and for elderly people and people without car
- There exists several options and strategies to improve the provision, dealing all with economies of scale and/or economies of scope (e.g. combination of several domains, movable and temporary solutions or provision via Internet)

Based on a rich collection of “best practices”, all of the partners of PUSEMOR are implementing some regional pilot projects. The thematic focus of these activities lies on the domains telecommunication, education and daily needs.

Some conclusions regarding the aims of this seminar:

- Today’s provision systems depends on mobility and particularly on individual motor car traffic.
- Topography matters for the provision with public services! (costs of wideness, costs of topography and climate, costs of distance)
- The elaboration and implementation of pilot projects is an important challenge (and a chance) for translocal governance (⇔ capacity for regional governance).
- The success of regional pilot projects is and will be strongly influenced by national and international economic, legal and institutional framework conditions.

Figure 7 Origin of Partners / regional teams of PUSEMOR project



Source: PUSEMOR project documentation

2.3.3 Workshop 2: Public services

The workshop "Public services" was chaired by Ingrid Machold from the Austrian Bundesanstalt für Bergbauernfragen (Federal Institute of less favoured and mountainous Areas) and grouped about 17 people.

Ingrid Machold opened the workshop by summarising three main issues of public service provision mentioned in the presentation:

- How can the costs of public services in mountain areas be reduced?
- How to deal with the political context (trend to privatisation and liberalism)?
- What strategies can be chosen to improve the situation of public services in mountain areas (e.g. combination of services, mobile services, use of NTC, etc.)?

In the beginning of the discussion the wish for good examples of public service provision was strengthened. As public services increasingly withdraw particularly from mountain areas the need for new and innovative forms of services is pervasive. But participants pointed out that there cannot be an easy, well-fitting answer for all the regions because each region has its own starting point, common standard and special needs which have to be considered.

Concerning the issue of costs the discussion centred around the question how to organise public services and how to activate the local stakeholders to find appropriate solutions for the regions. The question of service costs should be transferred to a later date. An important but difficult issue is to know the needs of the population and to set up common standards. At local level, the stakeholders generally know better what they need but this information is not always shared by political people. Therefore, there is a lack of information at regional or national level, which prevents to draw a comprehensive picture of the situation.

The experiences made in Italy (communita montana), in Greece (Leader project) and in the PUSEMOR project (Interreg III B Alpine Space), underpin the need that the organisation of the public services should be a matter of local/regional authorities in order to find solutions adapted at the local situation. Others pointed out that the role of national authorities in providing public services is still crucial, particularly in financial terms. At any rate it is important to improve the capacity building of local authorities in mountain areas and to manage public services in a more flexible way. Leader and Interreg initiatives as well as public private partnerships are well conceived tools which aim to support this process.

2.4 Accessibility / Transport

2.4.1 Territorial impact of EU transport policy – changes and risks for mountain regions, based on ESPON projects

Klaus Spiekermann, Spiekermann & Wegener Urban and Regional Research, D – Dortmund

Transport infrastructure is often seen as an important factor of regional development. The presentation picked up the relationship between transport infrastructure, resulting locational advantages or disadvantages and the relationship to regional economic development. It is based on the ESPON projects 1.2.1 (Transport services and networks, territorial trends and basic supply of infrastructure for territorial cohesion), 1.1.3 (Enlargement of the European Union and the wider European perspective as regards its polycentric spatial structure) and 2.1.1 (Territorial impact of EU transport and TEN policies).

Some of the presented findings:

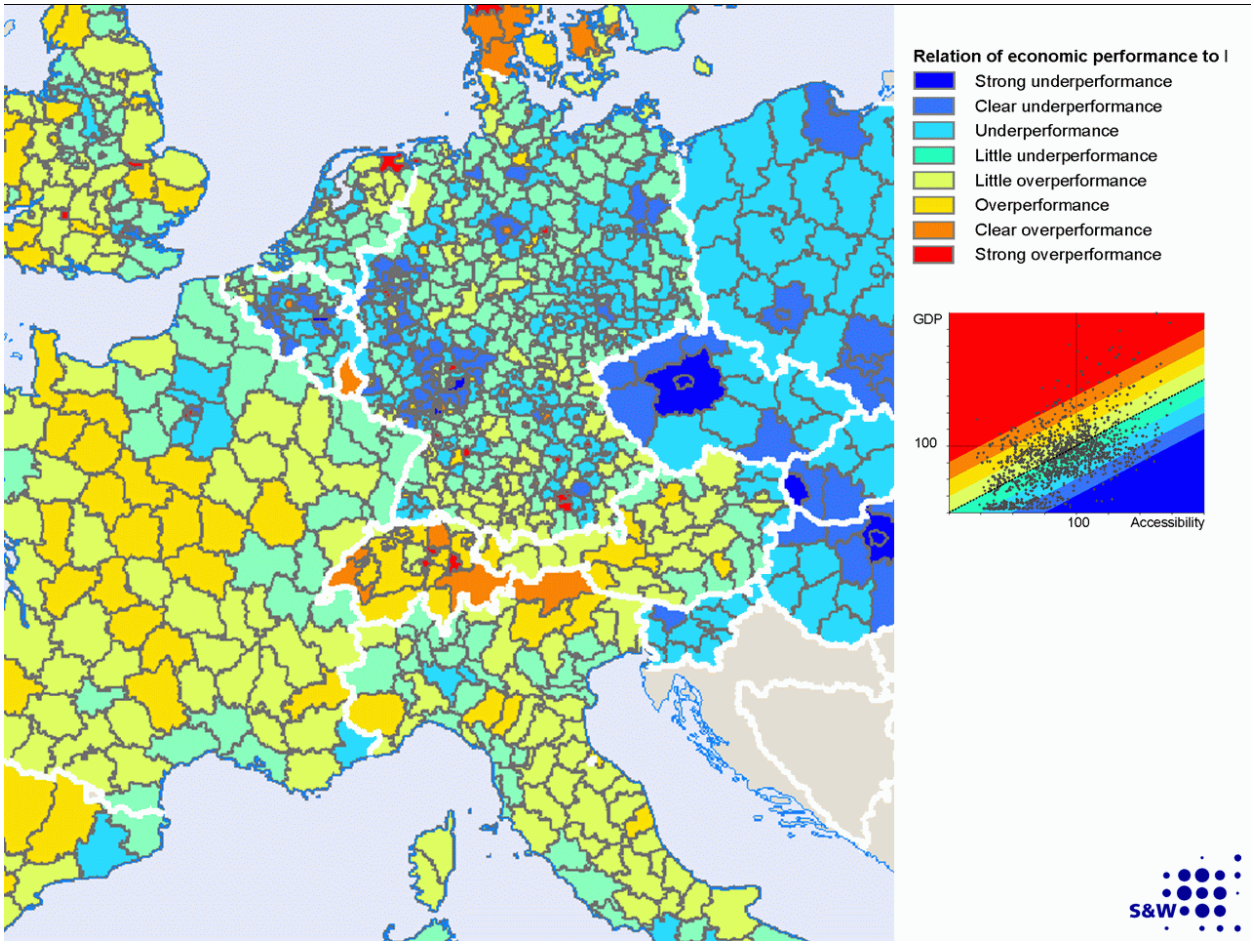
- Europe is characterised by huge disparities in accessibility and several overlaying core-periphery pattern: (1) between central and remote regions (2) between western and eastern Europe and (3) between agglomerations and hinterland. Regarding this, mountain regions seem not to show specific characteristics.
- Accessibility as main “product” of the transport system measures the benefits of transport infrastructures for households and firms. Regions with a good access will – *ceteris paribus* – be more competitive and more successful in development. However, the relationship between transport infrastructure and economic development has become more complex. There are successful regions in the European core confirming the theoretical expectation that location matters. However, there are also centrally located regions suffering from industrial decline and high unemployment. On the other side there are also prosperous peripheral regions such as the Scandinavian countries. To make things even more difficult, some of the economically fastest growing regions are among the most peripheral ones.

- The application of the SASI model[1] shows, that often, central regions will take more profit from the investment in transport infrastructures in peripheral regions as the peripheral regions oneself.

Some further conclusions (based on the mentioned ESPON projects):

- Normally, large increases in accessibility translate into only small changes in economic activity.
- Mountain regions perform often better than their location would suggest.
- It seems that in central mountain regions with a good economic performance (as the Alpine regions) the European large scale infrastructure projects will bring more positive economic effects than in peripheral mountain regions.

Figure 8 Relation between accessibility and economic performance



Source: ESPON project 1.2.1 (www.espon.eu), zoomed-in to Alpine area

[1] The simulation model SASI can forecast the impacts of transport infrastructure investments on socio-economic activities and developments in Europe and has a special attention to the spatial distribution of impacts.

2.4.2 Sustainable solutions to grade up the accessibility of mountain regions

Angela Rollando, LEADER+ local action group LAG Appennino Genovese, IT – Genova

The LAG Appennino Genovese area is the rural part of the Province of Genova (a NUTS III region) in Liguria, between the massifs of Alps and Appennino. Most important weaknesses are a lack of services and infrastructures, a considerable ageing of population, a low density of settlement and population / desertification and a high unemployment rate. On the other hand, the strengths are the high quality of environment, the presence of agricultural and other products of a high quality, some active local associations and the proximity to urbanised and tourist centres on the Mediterranean coast.

Ms Angela Rollando showed in her speech the importance of a special approach to grade up the accessibility and the economic performance of rural areas as the Appennino Genovese: It's crucial to combine a multi-sectoral (instead of single-edged) strategy with a massif (territorial) and a bottom-up approach. More concretely, the following projects and actions are running in Appennino Genovese to grade up accessibility:

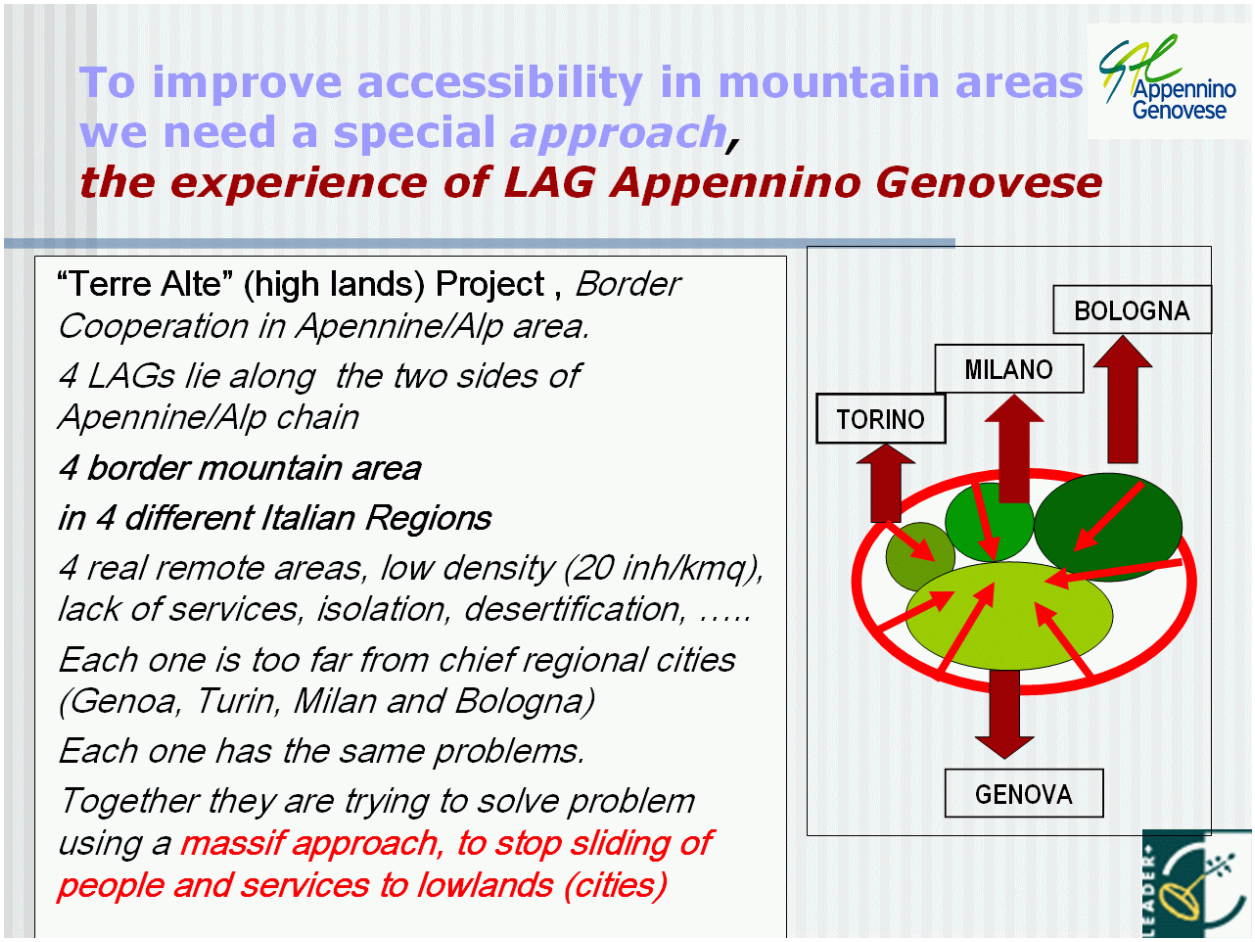
- Pilote projects to implement and support systems of transport on demand in remote valleys
- Promotion activities to increase the utilisation of public transport, in particular for the coast-inland connection and for tourist (with a special website and special events)
- Actions for integrated use of (public) transport not only for people but also for goods (post, medicaments, food...)
- Implementation and upgrading of broad band services (infrastructures as well as new innovative applications as e.g. telemedicine and cultural activities)

Finally, to grade up accessibility in remote/mountain areas, it is suggested to start from the point of view of mountain communities. We must consider the local/regional socio-economic and environmental contexts, the realities of the massif regions. We must work to increase quality of life and services for inhabitants and enterprises, using when and where it is possible new technologies. It is necessary to find and test new and innovative solutions to solve the desertification of mountain areas, where it is impossible to use the same solutions as in urban areas. Also, it is very important to analyse the results of different local pilot projects in the alpine space. We must find the

correct indicators useful to elaborate new actions and programmes to grade up accessibility in remote areas.

Regarding the future of mountain areas in Europe, Mrs Angela Rollando pleads for a more intense exchange of experiences among mountain regions, for new cooperation projects between mountain regions, but also between mountain areas and centres and finally for a new strong European policy for mountain areas.

Figure 9 The "massif approach" – Appennino Genovese



2.4.3 Workshop 3: Accessibility / Transport

The workshop "Accessibility / Transport" was chaired by Ivan Curzolo, JTS Alpine Space Programme, D - Rosenheim

The different positions and backgrounds of the attendants were a great added value for the workshop on „accessibility / transport". NGO representatives were present as well as public officers, researchers of public and private institutions and members of international bodies within the Alps.

Two issues where raised and the discussions moved around them:

"Mountain region do not show specific characteristics" was one of the conclusions of the intervention by Mr. Spiekermann in his "Territorial impact of transport policy – chances and risks for mountain regions based on ESPON results". Taking this aspect into consideration, should transport policy makers also decide not to have any specific approach towards mountain issues?

The discussion highlighted that the conclusion of the ESPON study has been influenced by the scale used to measure the impacts. NUTS 5 or even smaller scale analysis could maybe show different results. This lead to the conclusion that also accessibility indicators should be problem related, focusing on different aspects than just plain economic development. Common Alpine transport policies should be supported by data bases gathering data at different levels, otherwise they might be somewhat ineffective.

Generally, further studies should focus on how to develop the ESPON approach to a smaller scale.

Also the accessibility concept should be explored differently if it is considered an "objective", a goal to be achieved or just a tool, to reach other, different targets.

The other main issue of the discussion was based on the question if accessibility projects, implemented within the different EU instruments, show any impact at local level?

Different examples illustrated during the presentation of Mrs. Rollando "Sustainable solutions to grade up the accessibility of mountain regions" have shown that local projects may have relevant impacts when combining integrated and massif/global approaches with bottom-up ones, able to involve local communities as well as policy makers.

When it comes to measure these results, however, some difficulties arise because impacts can be collected only some time after the implementation of the projects. Furthermore, the set of indicators is not always properly chosen. A careful identification and selection of indicators should be promoted already in the programming phase, in order to foster a sound implementation of the project activities.

2.5 Economy

2.5.1 The economic situation in European mountain regions as an objective of research – ESPON results and other analytical approaches & studies

Erik Gløersen, Nordregio – Nordic Centre for spatial development, SWE-Stockholm

In order to deepen the insight provided by findings of ESPON projects dealing with economic issues (as e.g. Nr 3.4.2 or 1.2.3), Mr. Erik Gløersen from Nordregio presented the study "*Mountain areas in Europe*" which was commissioned by the European Commission (DG REGIO) from Nordregio in 2004.

In this study, the mountain areas of Europe are identified on the basis of topographic and other physical-geographic criteria (height about sea level, decline and climate) and so called "massifs" (or "socio-economically defined mountain ranges") were defined. Based on this delimitation, it is obviously possible to identify the proportion of each NUTS 2 or NUTS 3 regions which is to be considered as mountainous. It can then be tempting to identify 'mountain regions' by apply a threshold value to these proportions, e.g. by considering that all regions with more than 50 %" mountain areas should be considered as 'mountain regions'. This however implies a very significant mismatch, as extensive lowland areas will be incorrectly included, and mountain areas will be excluded. More importantly, important mountain area issues are blotted out as strong socio-economic gradients between neighbouring piedmont and highland communities will not be reflected by regional average values.

It is therefore necessary to deal with the NUTS 5 level (municipalities). Within the ESPON programme, a limited but significant range of statistics is available at this scale for most European countries, as demonstrated by the Nordregio study "*Mountain areas in Europe*". The municipal database developed by this project was admittedly extended to include both mountainous and non-mountainous countries in the framework of ESPON. This was however done at a late stage of the programme, and the data sets were consequently not actively used in the ESPON analyses.

The maps resulting from this database at NUTS 5-level confirm some well-known characteristics of mountain areas, such as for example a general over-representation of employment in the primary sector combined with lower proportions of arable land than in most lowland areas. The overall conclusion is however that the economic profiles and situations of mountain areas are contrasted across Europe. When observing demographic trends between 1991 and 2001, one finds a roughly equal number of mountain ranges experiencing population increase and decline.

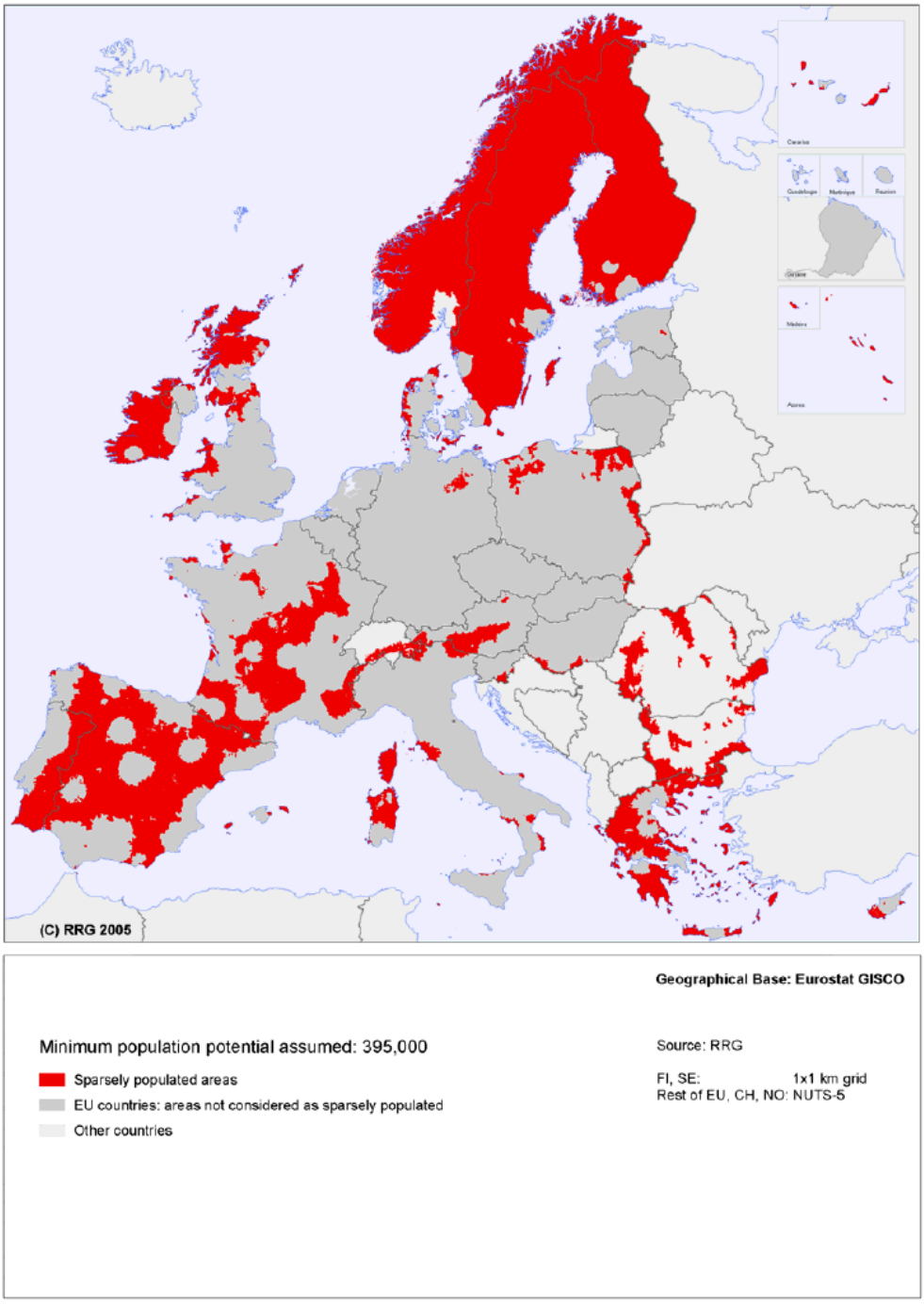
The question therefore remains whether mountain areas actually have specific preconditions for economic and social development. A key element in this respect can be the presence of numerous small labour markets. Mountain areas do indeed stand out from the rest of the European territory if one calculates the number of persons that can be reached within a 50 km radius, roughly corresponding to a maximum acceptable daily commuting distance (see figure 4). In this map, some other territories are however also highlighted, especially sparsely populated regions and islands. In all these areas, local labour markets are forced to specialise to remain competitive, which makes them particularly vulnerable to economic cycles and world market fluctuations. A more integrated European approach to strategic planning for long term economic development in areas with such small labour markets would be beneficial for mountain areas. This should however not entail that the ecological, climatic and topographical specificities of mountain areas within this larger group of physically handicapped regions should be ignored.

Some further conclusions and open questions:

- For massifs, delimitated on topographic indicators only few indicators are available and only strongly limited quantitative transnational analyses are possible (at the moment).
- There are several (physical) handicapped regions in Europe as ultraperipheral, very sparsely populated, very mountainous areas and the Islands. The shared socio-economic characteristics of these areas derive from the small size of local labour markets, and the difficulty to provide goods and services in a cost-efficient way.
- However, mountain areas have specific ecological preconditions that need to be integrated in any sustainable strategy of regional development.

- When designing strategic development plans for mountain areas, one should not envisage them as if they were isolated from their spatial surroundings. Statistical analyses should at the contrary seek to identify all types of human and economic capital which can be mobilised by a mountain area, even if these factors of development are located in neighbouring lowlands. The relations between urban centres of the piedmonts and mountainous “hinterlands” are indeed increasingly important; the question is how to use the economic development forces and potentials in a mutually beneficial way for both types of areas.
- Accessibility measures are therefore of key importance for an improved understanding of the economic potentials of mountain areas. They need to be designed from the point of view of individual mountain communities and industries, and not from a hypothetical European perspective. This is not incompatible with a pan-European mapping of accessibility to factors of economic development, but requires further investigation on the concrete issues to which mountain communities and industries are confronted.

Figure 10 Areas with limited population potential



Source: Gløersen et al. (2004) Northern *Peripheral Sparsely Populated Regions in the European Union*, Nordregio report 2005:4, Stockholm: Nordregio.

2.5.2 To grade up mountain regions with an integrated approach for agriculture and tourism – a case of southern Europe

Alex Koutsouris, Agricultural University of Athens, Greece

The quantitative-statistical approach of most of the ESPON projects is only one possibility to understand regional development – and in particular for understanding the situation and the trends on a local (micro) level, the findings of such an approach have to be interpreted with caution. In his speech, Mr. Alex Koutsouris presented a concrete example of a LEADER project combining agriculture and tourism in a region located in Central Greece. In a more qualitative rather than quantitative approach the strategies and relations of many players in regional development (development agency, entrepreneurs, local population, state, local authorities and consultants) were analysed to better understand the potentials and obstacles of a bottom-up rural development strategy.

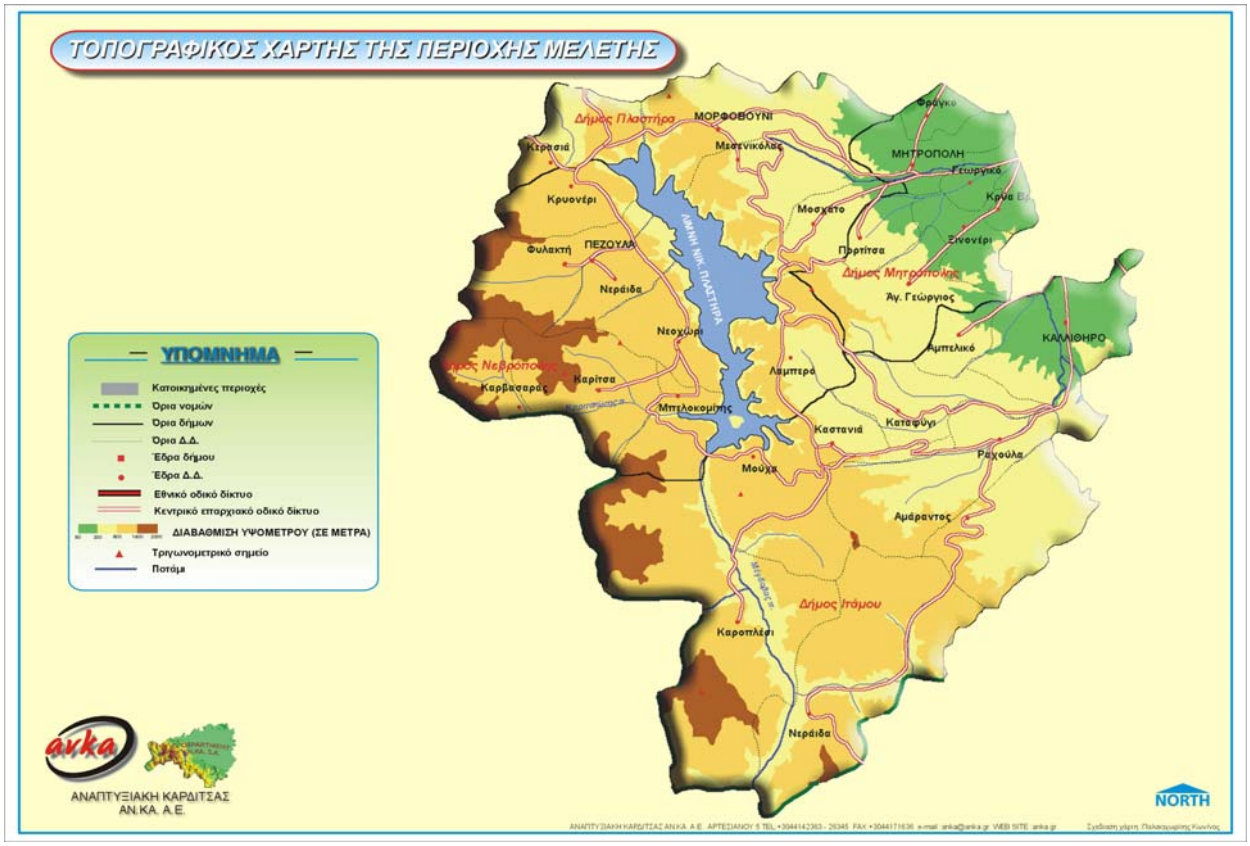
Before presenting the findings of his study, Mr. Alex Koutsouris explained why some statistic indicators (population, cultivated land & farms, livestock, tourism establishments) evolved as they have done during the last decades and showed the fallacies of statistics in the Greek context. Normally the figures don't correspond to the real development, but the strategy, how population and in particular agriculture have responded to modification of the legal framework and new instruments of subsidisation

Some other presented findings and conclusion:

- The most important players in a bottom up strategy for regional development (stakeholders) were in this case the local development agency; external investors (tourism) and their core team, the local entrepreneurs (agriculture, tourism, handicraft), the local authorities, the state (on the national and the regional level) and the consultants.
- These stakeholders have different interests and normative backgrounds. There are (among others) potential conflicts between short-time and long-time orientation, ecological-cultural and economical interests, backward and very forward orientated people, as well as between expert and practical local knowledge.
- It is very difficult (but indispensable) to bring these differences together around a table. Normally this isn't possible from one day to the other, but it needs time – and accordingly much tenacity and many resources.

- Often, the normal territorial approach of LEADER programme tends to mask inequalities and power relations between social actors by employing a consensus perspective. Action in promoting the dialogue and the interaction between different actors and networks is thus needed. But for reaching the goals, capacity building and animation must be made an integral part of Leader initiatives.

Figure 11 Lake Plastiras Area in Karditsa, Central Greece



2.5.3 Workshop 4: Economy

The workshop "Economy" was chaired by Ueli Stalder from the Swiss Centre for Mountain Regions (SAB), and grouped about 10 people.

Before discussing some theses prepared by Ueli Stalder participants gave following comments on the two interventions of Mr. Gløersen and Mr. Koutsouris:

- The situation showed in the ESPON results seems to be similar for island and for peripherical areas. However it depends if the area is touristic or not. The main common problems of the most of these areas (not the tourist one) is the decline of population, the low accessibility and the difficulties to provide goods and services in a cost-efficient way.
- Mr. Alex Koutsouris showed that the bottom – up approach of LEADER (or similar: local agenda 21, Communita montana in Italy or regions LIM in Switzerland) is good in theory, but the implementation is a big and permanent challenge. The social aspects (for example to put and to hold people around a table) are a key factor of success, but are often underestimated.

After the first round of discussion, the debate was structured with three theses:

1. *In the alps, 7 types of mountains areas are known big and medium cities, periurban regions, tourist destinations, mono industrial regions, agrarian regions, regions along transit routes and regions in-between without a clear profile) – are there other types of mountain regions in other mountain areas of Europe?*

   The participants of the workshop agreed with these 7 types and stressed the similarity between Islands and mountain regions. Regarding to future, the big challenge for the types 1 – 3 will be to preserve the ecological and socio-cultural sustainability. The crucial challenges for the types 5 – 7 seem to be the sustainable economic development including the prevention of a (further) depopulation.

2. *Regarding the actual economic situation and opportunities of development, other factors are equal or more important as "mountainity" (topography):*
   (a) centrality / accessibility within Europe / a country / a NUTS 2 region
   (b) attractiveness of landscape (<=> tourist potential)
   (c) provision with (public) services and infrastructures
   (d) equipment with human capital, incl. climate for innovations
   (e) capacity for territorial governance

   In the discussion the importance of the "soft" factors (d) and (e) as a permanent task of regional development policy was point out. Finally, it is very difficult to influence or to change the factors (a) and (b). The factor (c) is a "must", but we have to find more demand-orientated as well as more efficient solutions.

3. *Regional policy strategies aiming at encouraging the economic development of mountain regions have to deal with following areas of tension: sectoral vs. integrated policy, hard (infrastructures) vs. soft (human capital), bottom up vs. top down.*

   In the short discussion of this thesis participants found that for each region a mix of strategies is needed. It is also important to involve politicians in the participative process even if it is not easy to do (politicians are often afraid of loosing power). Local or regional animators need more tools and resources to deal with the social aspects of a project implementation.

2.6 Landscape / Natural hazards

2.6.1 Quality of the environment, natural heritage and natural hazards in European Mountain regions – evidences from ESPON projects

Tomaž Miklavcic, ESPON Contact Point Slovenia, SI – Ljubljana

The European Union is generally highly urbanized and densely settled territory. The largest natural areas, with exceptions of vast boreal forests in Scandinavia, can be identified in the mountainous areas of Europe. These areas are of high natural value as different geomorphologic features in combination with different climate zones provide wide range of different biotopes and habitats.

Rich natural heritage, valuable cultural landscapes and rich biodiversity are one of the major potentials and productivity factors of mountainous areas. Economy of these regions depends on its natural assets in particular as tourism is one of the major industries. The location of new investments is progressively taking factors of qualities in the surrounding areas into account. Such are access to beautiful landscapes and sites during leisure time.

High levels of development are connected with increasing pressure on the environment and natural resources. Take up of land and fragmentation of natural areas due to housing, industrial development and infrastructure construction might not be as evident as in some Mediterranean coastal areas but it can be observed in mountainous areas as well. If we take into consideration that natural qualities are the economical basis of mountainous areas it might be a concerning trend. This brings extra focus to the management of the natural heritage.

Mountainous areas are highly prone to natural hazards. Predominantly they are small in scale such as land slides and avalanches. Also floods are rather often occurring natural hazard. Impacts of predicted climate change are likely to be felt in mountainous areas.

The present wintertime cold extreme climate is to become substantially milder. This is going to influence the economy of mountainous areas, skiing tourism in particular.

Mr. Tomaz Miklavcic started his presentation by describing the following ESPON projects:

- 1.3.2 Territorial trends of the Management of the Natural Heritage
This project identified territorial trends threatening or challenging nature (e.g. Agricultural intensification and extensification, Forestry for the wood production, increase of the surface of urbanised land, growing tourism). It also delivered results on the natural heritage of Europe and the management of natural areas.

- 2.4.1 Territorial Trends and Policy Impacts in the Field of EU Environmental Policy

Key results of this project included the identification of territorial trends, a proposal for a Territorial Impact Assessment (TIA, for a short explanation see end of text) and future applied research recommendations.

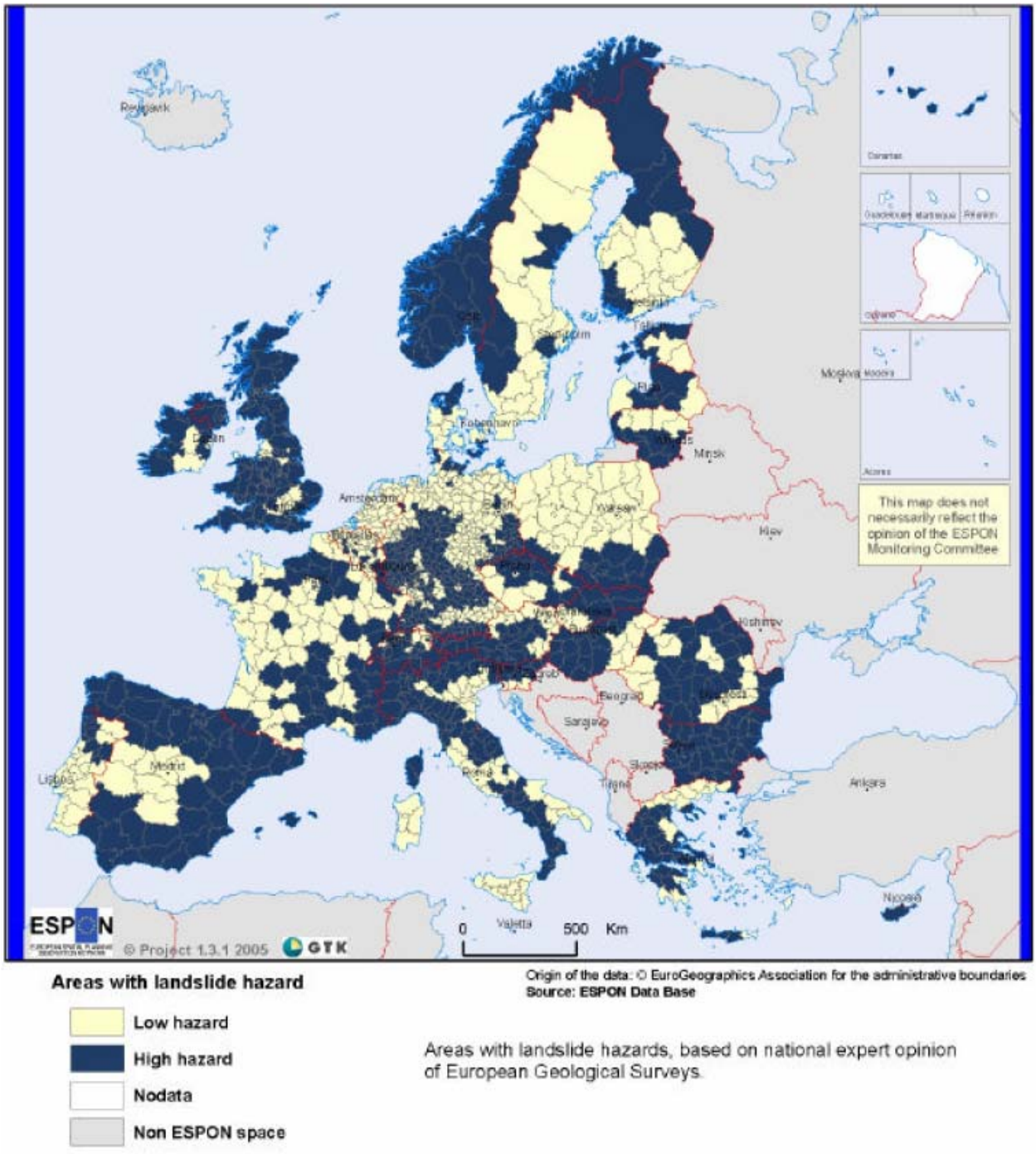
- 1.3.1 Spatial effects of natural and technological hazards

Research in the framework of this project has lead to the production of individual hazards recurrence maps, an integrated hazard map (high/low hazardous areas in Europe) and several other risk maps.

Some selected results in relation to mountainous areas: as regards the land-use composition, there is a high share of semi-natural areas in mountainous regions, underscoring the rich natural heritage, valuable cultural landscapes and rich biodiversity in these areas.

An aggregated hazard map (typology based on 15 hazard indicators) clearly shows that regions with high hazard exposure are found in almost all parts of Europe. The hazard exposure in mountainous areas is especially high as regards flooding and land slides (see figure 12).

Figure 12 Areas with landslide hazard



Source: ESPON project 1.3.1

Based on CORINE landcover data (1990-2000), the percentage of natural and semi natural areas lost due to urban and transport development was calculated. There was a main decrease on the Iberian peninsula and along

the Mediterranean coast. The pressure of tourism activities is noticeable. At the same time, most of new development is taking place on former agricultural land. So the question arises: Will the rather “good picture” of mountainous areas change due to tourism activities and transport development in the future?

Concerning urban growth and population development, there is no clear picture in relation to mountain regions.

Climate change is expected to affect the frequency and intensity of natural hazards. The southernmost regions might be most affected. The effects of increased precipitation on landslides and avalanches have to be assessed at local level.

Territorial Impact Assessment (TIA)

ESPON project 2.4.1 (Territorial trends and impacts of EU Environment Policy) proposes a feasible Territorial Impact Assessment (TIA) of EU Environmental Policy based on test studies related to three elements of European environmental policy (water management, nature and biodiversity, civil protection). The TIA methodology that is suggested has two levels: At the first level, basic connections and influences between policies, territorial trends and territorial objectives are identified and quantified. At the second level, TIA estimates the territorial effects of EU environmental policies on a certain region, taking into account the regional performance of chosen indicators. The TIA methodology was tested in five case studies on different spatial levels.

2.6.2 Assessment and mitigation of natural hazards induced by heavy rainfall – the experience of Interreg III B Project CatchRisk

Manfred Thüring, Institute of Earth Sciences (SUPSI), CH - Canobbio

In the last years, the European Alpine area probably has experienced an intensification of flood and slope instability phenomena due to an increase in frequency and intensity of heavy rainfall events, leading to territorial damage and the loss of human lives.

Several Alpine regions have developed individual methodologies to assess the hazard and risk of events which are linked to heavy rainfalls, such as floods, superficial landsliding, debris flows and rockfalls, and respective strategies to mitigate the effect of such hazards. The demand for an

exchange of know-how arose among the Alpine regions; it should enhance the creation of operational tools of common hazard assessment procedures and territorial management that can be applied on catchments with different characteristics and in different contexts in the Alpine space.

The European Community conducted project CatchRisk, from 2002 to 2005, realized within, and partly financed by the European Interreg III-B Alpine Space initiative. The project's main goal was to enhance the communication between the regions of the Alpine space and to create common approaches for the definition of hydrological and geological risk scenarios on the scale of hydrological catchments, their alluvial fans and main river courses. Particular attention was given to mass transport processes, such as rockfalls, shallow landslides, debris flows and river floods.

Within CatchRisk, where the public administrations, research institutes and private industries of 11 regions from 4 nations of the European Alpine space cooperated, the topics were addressed to assess – among others – flood hazards, the triggering of shallow landslides, debris flow expansion on alluvial fans and the reach of rockfalls. A particular effort was done to develop tools within GIS (geographical information systems) environments and to define risk scenarios.

The efforts had the main final goal to mitigate the impact of these natural hazard phenomena on the territory and draw conclusions for land use. The knowledge exchange and results of CatchRisk are documented in a scientific report and in guidelines for public administrations and professionals.

In this presentation project CatchRisk is outlined, focusing on its main goals: interregional exchange and communication. Some of the developed tools are presented, intended for the hazard and risk assessment within hydrological catchments, alluvial fans and main river courses – the model environment of the Alpine space.

Particular attention is given to the activities developed in the working groups which concentrated on the processes, which develop within a catchment basin: rockfalls, superficial landslides and debris flows. The reach of rockfalls was assessed using a geometrical approach, the method was implemented in a GIS environment. The forecasting of the triggering of superficial landslides and debris flows was addressed developing a regional historically-based model, based on triggering levels. GIS models, based on geotechnical-hydrological approaches were developed and implemented to study the triggering of superficial landslides. A debris flow expansion model was implemented in a GIS environment to simulate their expansion on alluvial fans. A debris flow monitoring and alert system was installed on a catchment basin prone to this type of hazard.

2.6.3 Workshop 5: Landscape / Natural hazards

Chaired by Antonia Leitz, JTS Alpine Space Programme, D - Rosenheim

Natural hazards/risks:

- risks are quite well known; mapping stays difficult, since those maps cannot be communicated to inhabitants of concerned regions
- a common "response handbook for natural risks" would be useful, meaning a collection of tools to address different risks effects (the Catchrisk representative mentioned this, as they have a similar document only in Switzerland so far)
- as regards climate change, the focus should shift from the modelling of possible effects of climate change to a more applicative methodology for afflicted municipalities / regions; guidelines showing how to deal with known effects should be elaborated.

Landscape:

- no common position was found, whether landscape management affects risk management or vice versa; how to deal if risk management applications influence the landscape (river management)
- how to deal if traditional landscape management is abandoned (Alpine terraces or meadows) and these areas become as a consequence subject to risks like flooding...?

ESPON:

- ESPON maps are useful for a general overview, but not applicable on regional project level, since more detailed data is needed here - could be an input for the new ESPON programme: to collect data also in smaller scale;
- Proposal to connect ESPON and Interreg projects closer in new programming period, e.g. exchange on data collections or common assessments of project proposals.

2.7 Governance

2.7.1 Governance of mountain development – evidences from ESPON projects

Christof Abegg, EBP Switzerland, project partner in ESPON project 2.3.2 (Governance), CH-Zurich

The presentation of Mr. Abegg started with a short thematic introduction, then gave a description of the ESPON project 2.3.2 "Governance of Territorial and Urban policies" featuring some key results from the project. This was followed by a selection of policy recommendations and conclusions for mountain areas.

Today, modern spatial systems are characterised by complex patterns of interdependencies between actors, institutions, functional activities and spatial organisations. In the last two decades, the notion of governance has come to play a central role in explaining and conceptualising these changing relationships, focusing in particular on the transformation from government into what has come to be called governance.

Here, government refers to the dominance of state power organised through formal and hierarchical public sector agencies and bureaucratic procedures. Governance, on the other hand, refers to the emergence of overlapping and complex relationships, involving “new actors” external to the political arena.

These restructuring processes have marked a number of changes in governing structures of cities and regions, including:

- A relative decline in the role of the state in management of social and economic relationships

- The involvement of non-governmental actors in a range of state functions at a variety of spatial scales

- A change from hierarchical forms of government structures to more flexible forms of partnership and networking

- A shift from provision by formal government structures to the contemporary sharing of responsibilities and service provision between the state and civil society

- The emergence of local and regional forms of governance as a result of mobilisation and construction of scale-specific state policies and institutions

Territorial governance can be seen as a simple application of general principles of governance in urban and territorial field. Nevertheless, in a more complex and interesting way, territorial governance can be seen as a process that has specific characters deriving from its object, the territory. Here, territory may be defined as a "social and political construction" and as "territorial capital".

Within ESPON 2.3.2 Territorial Governance was defined "as an organisational mode of collective action based on public an private actors partnerships and coalitions building, oriented towards a commonly defined objective.“

Key challenges for the territorial governance are to create horizontal and vertical cooperation/coordination between various levels of government (multilevel governance), sectoral policies with territorial impact, governmental and non governmental organizations and citizens (multichannel governance).

The aim of territorial governance is to create the favourable conditions that allow territorial collective action to take place in order to improve territories' competitiveness potential and to reach territorial cohesion at different spatial scales. Hence, territorial governance is the conditio sine qua non to guarantee a more balanced development across Europe and thus, a precondition for the sustainable development of mountain regions.

The ESPON project 2.3.2 „Governance of territorial and urban policies from EU to local level“ had a closer look at the concept of territorial governance, studying national policies and case studies on different levels in 29 European Countries. The project was worked out by 24 institutions, lead by the University of Valencia. The draft of the final report has been published in May 2006.

The objectives of the project were formulated as follows:

- Elaborate a research framework which allows to comprehensively investigate the issue of governance, through (1) Theoretical work, (2) National & EU Overviews

- Definition of a set of indicators related to specific factors that characterise successful governance or obstruct it

- Preparation of comparable Case Studies, with particular focus on governance at transnational level (Benchmarking, Best practice)

- Draw conclusions and strategic recommendations on improvement of governance at different spatial scales

Thus, the project included a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches.

If from the results we want to learn something specific for the mountain areas, we have to go to the regional level. In ESPON 2.3.2 a regional typology of governance had been worked out, based on indicators of structural and dynamic aspects of governance. The typology depicts against an average those regions, which are less advanced, and those, which are more advanced.

Data collection is one of the most important constraints, especially the difficulty in obtaining data and developing indicators on territorial governance at regional level.

When comparing case studies, it is obvious that national, regional and local cultures, histories and practices are of essence. Governance is something built as a path-dependent and historical process.

Currently it is possible to analyse the design of governance on State level. The project has set the first step on the NUTS2 level to study governance impacts at a regional level.

What can be done at regional level to enhance the governance capacity? The final report includes policy recommendations at local and regional level.

Horizontal and vertical integration takes time. It is therefore necessary to be realistic regarding goals both in terms of scope and time frame.

Local and regional authorities should develop a strategic vision for their territory, alongside their detailed territorial governance responsibilities.

Networking is a necessary step, particularly among small local authorities in isolated, remote and resource-deficient areas, to acquire a more influential voice.

Local authorities should participate in trans-frontier cooperation schemes, with clear allocation of responsibilities for development and service delivery. Here, Interreg is an important instrument to disseminate best practice in spatial development.

Sub-national authorities should aim at realise intentions on participation, openness and innovative practices. Make sure that there is more than lip service paid to these ideals of good governance.

Systematic citizen information campaigns and training of officials are necessary to instill a new mentality of two-way communication.

The regions are the adequate level to test new and innovative forms of governance. Improving governance is a process of learning by doing.

Simple as it is, governance capacities are strongly related to competencies and resources on regional level.

What to learn for the governance of mountain regions? Can these recommendations just be transferred? In general, the same principles and mechanisms of governance are working in all regions. Thus the mountain regions are not a special case. More important than the geographical position is the influence of the national legislation and the national culture on the importance or priorities of the various dimensions of governance.

However, one has to consider the specific aspects of territorial capital, which are the fundamental preconditions for governance. They can be specified – in a very general characterisation - by

Intellectual / Social capital: „brain-drain“, Ageing population

Political capital: fragmentation and weak political influence

Material capital: infrastructural capacity

Natural capital: Vulnerability of natural resources

Therefore, the strengthening of territorial capital and the enhancement of territorial governance have to be seen as a mutual learning-process. INTERREG projects are an important field of experiment to better understanding this connection.

2.7.2 Challenges, necessities and opportunities of territorial cooperation in mountain regions

Frank Gaskell, President of Euromontana, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, SCO - Inverness

In Euromontana, the European Association of Mountain Areas, 60 national or regional organisations are involved. It is a multisectoral network containing development agencies, regional and local authorities, environmental agencies, agricultural organisations and research institutes. Main activities include:

- exchange with institutions, other networks
- coordinating co-ordination projects
- contributing to a better expertise on mountain development

Euromontana maintains a co-ordination office based in Brussels.

The main acitivities include information / policy observatory, consultation and the participation in projects like e.g. Interreg and Interact.

The expectations of Euromontana towards ESPON are as follows:

- Recognition of the “mountain-issue” (a good basis is the report on Mountain areas in Europe: Nordregio 2004)

- Analysis at an appropriate level of disaggregation

- Creating a suitable interface/liaison between the two organizations

A few challenges are identified:

- Practical – fragmented communities, communication, air, road, ICT, oncosts, the accelerating polarisation of economic activity

- Policy – ‘SAPIR approach to the Lisbon Strategy’ – growth pole concentration

- Operational – cash flow challenge, lead partner burden

But at the same time, there are also opportunities:

- Principal reservoir of diversity

- Quality/purity cachet

- European Charter for Mountain Quality Foods

- Commonality of shared challenges

It is a necessity to recognize the mountain specificity, so maybe there should be e.g. a designation of a Mountain Quality label, taking into account the positive externalities of Mountain Land Management. On the other hand, there must be more basic data available, and there is need for a more quantification-oriented approach. The Nordregio Mountain Study provides a good start, but it still contains flaws (e.g. concerning the delimitation), and there is a need for continuous updating of the findings.

As regards the ESPON 2013 programme, there are many positive aspects:

The focus on Territorial Cohesion/geographic balance of economic development, the recognition of concentration/preference for polycentric development, the aims of Priority 3 to create comparative regional data at a detailed geographical scale and references to evidence based policy development are all positive signs pointing into the right direction and being in line with the expectations of Euromontana.

2.7.3 Workshop 6: Governance

Chaired by Wendelin Strubelt, Vice Director Bundesamt für Bauwesen und Raumordnung (BBR), D - Bonn

In the discussion on governance structures, it was made clear that there are huge differences between different countries. The national influence or context is obviously very important. It was reminded that in ESPON project 2.3.2 (Governance) there are national overviews available.

But what exactly are the specificities of mountainous regions? The discussion group consisted mainly of people from the Alpine region, so the Alps stood at the centre of the discussion. One important specificity of the Alps is the fact that they are centrally located, and – comparatively – overcrowded. And they are divided by a large number of national boundaries. Moreover, every country has its specific pattern of "spatial communication". The Alpine Convention seems to follow a too national approach, much more should be done on the regional and local level. There are 4 languages in the Alpine Convention (whereas in Interreg-Projects, English usually is the main language). All these aspects are complicating things.

The question was raised if there are partnerships and networks between mountains and flatland (as for example urban-rural).

The importance of best practice exchange was underlined.

It is important that a new"style of living" (modern, open-minded, good network structures etc.) can evolve in the mountainous areas, otherwise the Alps will become a mere "hinterhof" of the big cities.

As regards ESPON, the pioneering role of this programme is acknowledged. The approach was very quantitative until now, maybe this could change. The ESPON 2.3.2 project on Governance was the first ESPON project relying mainly on qualitative approaches, showing that ESPON has already integrated this dimension into its research projects.

But more important: ESPON could provide a foundation or platform for structuring the discussions that will / have to follow.

2.8 Mountains in European Geographical and Political Imagination: yesterday – today – tomorrow

Bernard Debarbieux, Professor, Department of Geography, University of Geneva, CH

The main idea of this seminar was to bring together expert visions of mountains in European Space on one side, and local and regional actors trying to cope with specific situations in mountain regions, on the other. Mr. Debarbieux presented one main question: when and how people and institutions agree for building territorial public policies?

Common geographical objects (like cities, mountains, districts, watersheds, etc.) can have various meanings and be based on different experiences. Various stakeholders usually carry different interpretations of the state and the future of these objects, i.e. mountains. But these interpretations can be part of a same paradigm – a lens through which reality is shaped and thanks to which collective action is made possible – and can be understood by each other (they can be "translated").

A common agreement on a paradigm occurs, when people agree on three elements:

1) A set of images

2) A rational argumentation

3) A set of rules or laws

The European project, as any political project, needs such paradigms. It needs the common identification of some common objects or ideals – such as Human Rights or Peace, or – for territorial matter – cities (or: the cultural meaning of urbanity) and borders, for example. Are mountains such an object? Can Europeans, whatever status, political compentencies, cultural level they have, share a common paradigm related to mountains?

If we have a look backward in European cultural history, we find such paradigms combining Europe and Mountains. The European continent used to be described as a major landform structured by a natural skeleton, « its system of mountains ». By the end of the 18th century, this led to the implementation of the natural borders theory, mountains being seen as natural barriers between nation-States. Later, European States, according to the Welfare-State ideology, have been eager to introduce modernity and social and economic equity into the marginalized mountains (1945-1980's).

Today, is there any kind of common paradigm though which European mountains are seen and managed ? Actually mountains appear in sectorial European policies (agriculture, environment, especially through the Wild Birds and Habitats Directives). But at the same time, other policies (Interreg, traffic and infrastructure) have treated mountains as natural and political barriers which should be lowered, if not erased.

So far, they have not been recognized as a major component of the European project. As a matter of fact, some major leaders have tried, in vain, to shape diverse structuring images of mountains liable to lead to such status:

- Some promote an apology of biological and cultural diversity: see the introductive speech given by Romano Prodi at the conference "Common Policies and mountains" held in Bruxelles inOctober 2002.

- Others have been willing to introduce mountains and natural handicaps a major element in the definition of new European regional policy (2007-2013): see the study ordered by Michel Barnier and done by Nordregio in 2004

- This endeavour to recognize mountains as a meaningful component of the European continent as led to their mention in the European Union's Constitutional Treaty, 18 June 2004, Article III-220: "Among the regions concerned, particular attention shall be paid to rural areas, areas affected by industrial transition, and areas which suffer from severe and permanent natural or demographic handicaps such as the northernmost regions with very low population density, and island, cross-border and mountain areas".

But these images have not had no effective consequence so far. Mountains as a whole are still not recognized as a relevant object in the European project.

For the future, what conditions should be assembled for allowing mountains to acquire a new political status ? A new common paradigm should be built relying on a set of images (symbolic representations of mountains), of discourses (rational argumentation about their role and importance) and policies (giving to them a juridical status). For reaching such a status, three issues should be addressed:

- Issue 1: To fill the gap between expert and juridical visions of mountains and inhabitants' ones.

  It is striking to see that expert and juridical definition and delineation of mountains are far away from common ones: Should Zurich be treated as

a mountain city as it is in the Nordregio study ? Should high latitudes areas in Scandinavia be considered as mountain regions as in official delineation ? These choices are not compatible with common visions of mountains and make difficult any common agreement of such an issue.

Are the cultural values associated with mountains by European societies taken in account in expert knowledge and actual policies related to them? Thanks to centuries of tourism, European people have got a very strong idea of what mountains are and of their common utility. Thanks to tourism and to the openness of mountains societies, a strong identity feeling have emerged, linking people with their environment. This led to the eagerness to share this kind of feeling between mountain people through partnership, associations and networks. This kind of characteristic has not been yet taken in account in a continental vision of European policies.

- Issue 2: To associate a wide range of stakeholders on the definition of a common paradigm on European mountains

Taking in account local values associated with mountains and continental values related to the European territory, and taking in account the growing interest for multilevel coordination in land planning and management, and for subsidiarity and participation, some mountains features could he highlightened and collectively worked. Especially

- the contribution of mountains in European natural and cultural diversity
- the capacity of mountains regions to appear as a model for sustainable development policies
- the experience of mountains societies in political autonomy
- the growing importance of European socities of individual well-being and quality of life

These features have been promoted by several stakeholders, including European institutions such as the European Economic and Social Committee. But so far, there is no consensus on the opportunity to ground a common vision of Europe on such elements

- Issue 3: To make information and data base a major tool for shared knowledge and collective action

Information and data bases play a key role in expert diagnosis and the conception of policies. But so far, data bases are not very efficient for analysing the social and economic situation of mountains since the scale of desaggregation of data is not always precise enough.

In a participatory and multi-level, multi-stakeholders conception of public action, it should be important to be very attentive to the relevancy of statistical criteria for local people. It should also be important to ease the access and the use of data-base by local people for building and implementing local and network projects.

At the end of his presentation, Mr. Debarbieux said that the MONTESPON Seminar has shown that the organizers and many people who attended it are sensitive to these issues. But many MONTESPON seminars and other kind of initiatives are needed if Europeans were to adopt a common paradigm related to mountains which would go much further than the present state.

3 Conclusions

3.1 Main points from the Round table discussion

The round table was chaired by Mrs. Antonia Leitz from the Joint Technical Secretariat JTS of the Interreg III B Programme "Alpine Space" in Rosenheim (D).

The Participants were

- Mr. Peter Mehlbye, Director ESPON Coordination Unit, Luxembourg
- Mr. Ruggero Schleicher-Tappeser, Acting Secretary of the Alpine Convention, Innsbruck
- Mr. Klaus-Dieter Schnell, Institute for public services and tourism, University of St. Gallen
- Mr. Wendelin Strubelt, Vice-Director Bundesamt für Bauwesen und Raumordnung, Bonn

The discussion was opened with the question to Mr. Mehlbye, how to bridge the gap between the (top down) approach of ESPON Programme and the needs of projects of spatial development in mountain regions.

Mr. *Mehlbye* highlighted the importance of both, the bottom up and the top down view, to better understand spatial development in Europe. He sees the two approaches not as concurrence, but as complementary. ESPON and the MONTESPON seminar show some interesting similarities between mountain and other regions (as e.g. border or coastal areas). Finally, an ESPON II programme (officially called ESPON 2013) will open some opportunities for new projects dealing also with the special issues of mountain regions (and others). ESPON 2013 would like to go more into the details and to have more relevance for practice of regional and spatial development – but the framework is not yet clear and the (political) discussions not easy. More generally, Mr. *Mehlbye* noted that there is certainly an opportunity to get "Mountains" into European politics. ESPON 2013 could serve as a platform to include the topic, because there are targeted analyses foreseen, based on user-demand, with more case studies etc.

Where should a future ESPON project about mountain regions have its priorities? Mr. *Schnell* began his answer with the needs of the processing Interreg-projects for clarifying the common (or different) framework conditions. He pleaded for a better spatial resolution of the analyses (NUTS

5 – or LAU 2 – instead of NUTS 2 or 3) and for more studies with a qualitative approach. Generally, ESPON projects about mountain regions would notably be reasonable if they could address some of the main problems of mountain areas like the lack of dynamics in economic development, the decreasing importance of tourism, the mismatch between economic benefits and ecological and socials costs of investments made or the shortfalls in regional governance. Last but not least he lobbied for more "democracy" in fixing the issues and aims of new ESPON projects: Not only the needs of the EU administration should be considered, but also the needs of national, regional and local spatial planning and development. The ESPON results must be usable for a broader audience. The results are still not very widely known, as Mrs. *Leitz* added.

Mr. *Schleicher-Tappeser* emphasised that the ESPON programme has closed an important gap in knowledge about spatial development in Europe. He assumes future interesting topics in the domain "quality of life / life styles", where also qualitative approaches should be applied. ESPON has a big relevance in particular for political milieus. So we have to be very cautious with statements as "mountain areas are not special areas" or "there are no differences between mountain and other areas" which have been made during the seminar. Finally he pointed out that the future SOIA (a statistical based alpine monitoring system) should be a great help to have more valuable information about the alpine space as mountain area. For SOIA as well as for ESPON it is crucial to produce information which is really needed, e.g. with regard to a fruitful benchmarking between mountain areas. The data should be used to identify positive developments, leading to best practice learning effects. He is confident that the scale problem (higher resolution, not stopping at NUTS 3) can be overcome in the future. The other "problem", being too quantitative, is another question. But Mr. *Schleicher-Tappeser* thinks that getting more "qualitative" is not necessarily a high priority.

Mr. *Strubelt* was pleading for an approach that does not forget the historical dimension of the development of the mountain areas, making a reference to the presentation given by Mr. *Debarbieux*. The "mountain area paradigm" is definitely changing, the Mountains are perceived in a constantly changing way, old pictures are replaced by old ones.

Mr. *Mehlbye* pointed out that the European focus of ESPON will remain, but he is sure that in the future, more detailed data will be used, and he also mentioned that there will be a more close cooperation between ESPON and national Spatial Observation Systems.

3.2 General conclusions and outlook

MONTESPON was a first attempt to bring two different perspectives together: the ESPON perspective and the mountainous regions perspective with their specific needs. As this was a first attempt, it is clear that no immediate results could have been expected. Nevertheless, MONTESPON has produced some remarkable results and has laid the basis for important further steps:

The seminar opened the eyes to actors of both worlds for the expectations of each other. It was understood by all participants, that both worlds can benefit from each other. Local actors such as a Local actor group (LAG) can benefit from ESPON's overall picture to integrate their views. ESPON on the other side can confront and check its results with results from other studies such as those done in Interreg-programmes.

Many contacts between key players have been made during the seminar. Contacts were going on at a bilateral level, as this report goes to press. Actors such as the Alpine Convention and Euromontana are actively searching the contact to ESPON to foster future cooperation.

ESPON clearly expressed its interest to re-orientate ESPON 2013 on user-demand. Mountain areas can be one thematic approach.

The gap between the ESPON sphere and the Interreg project sphere could not be bridged, but it became a bit narrower. It was an important first step towards more mutual learning and apprehension of the results. Next steps have to follow. It will be important to repeat the good experience of this first MONTESPON seminar. A possible path would be, to organize regional seminars in different mountain massifs, e.g. the Scandinavian countries, the Carpathians, the Pyrenees, the Balkans etc. The continuation of this process would help ESPON in identifying new topics. It would permit stakeholders in the mountain areas on the other side to appreciate the potential of ESPON's statistical background. Saying this, we must bear in mind the actual limits. Actually, ESPON delivers data on NUTS2. This degree of spatial resolution tends to hide mountain realities. This must be overcome in ESPON II. Case studies on different mountain massifs, which could be elaborated in strong coordination with stakeholders from those massifs, are a possible way to go. The next logical step would then be to exchange the experiences of those case studies. This would really encourage an active exchange between European mountain massifs and help to build a common paradigm of European mountains.

Annex

Annex A: Seminar Programme

Annex B: List of Participants

Annex C: Analysis of the Feedback Forms

Annex A: Seminar Programme

Tuesday, 5 September 2006 (Day 1)

12.15	*Registration and coffee*	
13.00	**Welcome and introduction**	Prof. Pierre-Alain Rumley, Director of the Swiss Federal Office for Spatial Development (ARE) Marco Kellenberger, ESPON Contact Point (ECP) Switzerland, ARE
13.30	**The ESPON Programme – goals, main results and future**	Peter Mehlbye, Director ESPON Coordination Unit
14.00	**Mountain regions in Europe – from the point of view of ESPON**	Thomas Egger, Director Swiss Centre for Mountain Regions SAB (chair of the seminar)
14.20	**Demographic change in Mountain regions – evidences from ESPON projects**	Mats Johansson, ECP Sweden, Lead Partner ESPON project 1.1.4 (Demography)
14.40	**Demographic change and its implications for rural and regional development policy**	Tor Bremer, Sogn og Fjordane Fylkeskommune, IR III C Project euromountains.net
15.00	**Social aspects of territorial development in mountain regions – evidences from ESPON projects**	Bernd Schuh, ÖIR, Lead Partner of ESPON study 1.4.1 (Small and Medium Sized Towns) and ESPON project 1.4.2 (Social Aspects)
15.20	**Public services – new strategies to improve the provision of mountainous areas**	Ueli Stalder, SAB / Interreg III B project PUSEMOR
15.40	*Coffee break*	
16.10	**Territorial impact of transport policy - chances and risks for mountain regions based on ESPON results**	Klaus Spiekermann, Spiekermann & Wegener Urban and Regional Research, Lead- and Project partner in several ESPON projects
16.30	**Sustainable solutions to grade up the accessibility of mountain regions**	Angela Rollando, Leader+ Local Action Group (LAG) Appennino Genovese, Genova
16.50	**3 parallel Workshops:** • **Demography** • **Public Services** • **Accessibility / Transport**	Chaired by: Olaf Foss, ECP Norway Ingrid Machold, Bundesanstalt für Bergbauernfragen, Austria Ivan Curzolo, JTS Alpine Space Programme
18.00	**Conclusion from the workshops**	Plenary discussion
18.30	**End of the first session**	
18.45	*Welcome drink*	

Wednesday, 6 September 2006 (Day 2)

09.00	**Welcome and introduction to the second day of the seminar**	Silvia Jost, ESPON Monitoring Committee, Switzerland and Marco Kellenberger, Swiss ESPON Contact Point
09.10	**The economic situation in European mountain regions as an object of enquiry – ESPON results and other analytical approaches & studies**	Erik Gløersen, Nordregio
09.30	**To grade up mountain regions with an integrated approach for agriculture and tourism – a case of southern Europe**	Alex Koutsouris, Agricultural University of Athens, Greece
09.50	**Quality of the environment, natural heritage and natural hazards in European Mountain regions – evidences from ESPON projects**	Tomaž Miklavcic, ECP Slovenia
10.10	**Assessment and mitigation of natural hazards induced by heavy rainfall - the experience of Interreg III B Project CatchRisk**	Manfred Thüring, Institute of Earth Sciences (SUPSI), Canobbio, Switzerland
10.30	*Coffee break*	
11.00	**Governance of mountain development – evidences from ESPON projects**	Christof Abegg, EBP Switzerland, project partner in ESPON project 2.3.2 (Governance)
11.20	**Challenges, necessities and opportunities of territorial cooperation in mountain regions**	Frank Gaskell, Highlands and Islands Enterprise Inverness, President of Euromontana
11.40	**3 parallel Workshops:** • **Economy** • **Landscape / natural risks** • **Governance**	Chaired by: Ueli Stalder, SAB, Switzerland Antonia Leitz, JTS Alpine Space Programme Wendelin Strubelt, BBR, Germany
13.00	*Lunch*	
14.00	**Conclusion from the workshops**	Plenary discussion
14.30	**The actual situation and the future of mountainous areas in Europe – new strategies for policy makers**	Bernard Debarbieux, University of Geneva
15.00	**Round table and plenary discussion**	Chaired by Antonia Leitz, JTS Alpine Space Programme
15.45	*End of Seminar*	

Annex B: List of Participants

Last name	First name	Function	Organization	Address	Country
Abegg	Christof	Senior researcher	Ernst Basler + Partner AG	CH-8702 Zollikon	Switzerland
Arnberger	Arne	Researcher	Institut für Landschaftsentwicklung, Erholungs- und Naturschutzplanung; Universität für Bodenkultur Wien	Peter Jordan Strasse 82, A-1190 Wien	Austria
Aschwanden	Toni	International Transport Policy	Alpine-Initiative	Postfach 28, 6460 Altdorf	Switzerland
Bauer	Christina	Regionalentwicklung und EU-Regionalpolitik	Managing Authority Alpine Space	Postfach 527, A-5010 Salzburg	Austria
Baumgartner	Daniel	Research Associate	Swiss Federal Institute of Snow, Forest and Landscape Research (WSL), Regional economics and Development	Zürcherstrasse 111, 8903 Birmensdorf	Switzerland
Bayssiere	Magali	Junior Project Expert	ESPON Coordination Unit		Luxemburg
Birngruber	Heide		Office of the Government of Upper Austria, Department of Regional Planning	Bahnhofplatz 1, A-4021 Linz	Austria
Borer	Alex	Geschäftsführer	Verein Projekt TUSEC-IP Koordination Schweiz	Nordstrasse 220, 8037 Zürich	Switzerland
Bremer	Tor		Sogn og Fjordane Fylkeskommune		Norway
Cagianut	Francine		Federal Office for Spatial Development ARE	3003-Bern	Switzerland
Canti	Francesca Maria	Researcher	IREALP	Via Melchiorre Gioia 72, I-20125 Milano	Italy
Curzolo	Ivan	project officer	JTS Alpine Space Programme	Stadt Rosenheim, Postfach 1209, D-83013 Rosenheim	Germany
Debarbieux	Bernard	professor	University Geneva	Department of Geography	Switzerland
Della Giovanna	Marina	Interact Assistant	IREALP		Italy
Dell'Olmo	Tiziana	Regional co-ordination of transnational and interregional cooperation programmes (Interreg III B-III C)	Regione Piemonte	Corso Bolzano 44, I-10121 Torino	Italy
Egger	Thomas	Director	Schweizerische Arbeitsgemeinschaft für die Berggebiete (SAB)	Seilerstrasse 4. 3001 Bern	Switzerland
Foss	Olaf	ECP Norway	Norsk institutt for byog regionsforskning		Norway
Gaskell	Frank	President of Euromontana	Highlands ans Islands Enterprise Inverness		United Kingdom
Girotto	Fabio	Officer	Regione Lombardia, DG Territorio e Urbanistica,	Via Sassetti 32/2, I-20124 Milano	Italy
Gløersen	Erik	Lecturer	Nordregio		Sweden
Gretter	Alessandro	Researcher	Centro d'Ecologia Alpina	Loc. Viote del Monte Bondone, I-38060 Garniga Terme (TN)	Italy
Gulic	Andrej	Director	Urban Planning Institute	Trnovski pristan 2, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia	Slovenia
Haltmeier	Kartin	Former Deputy Programme Leader	Central Asian Mountain Partnership	Am Zopfbach 4, 8804 Au	Switzerland
Heeb	Johannes		CIPRA International & seecon gmbh	Bahnhofstrasse 2, 6110 Wolhusen	Switzerland
Jeanneret	Barbara	Collaboratrice scientifique, suppléante du chef de section	Office fédéral de la statistique, Division Economie spatiale et développement durable, section Analyses spatiales	Espace de l'Europe 10, 2010 Neuchâtel	Switzerland
Johansson	Mats	ECP Sweden	Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm		Sweden
Jost	Silvia	Co-ordinator for international affairs	Federal Office for Spatial Development ARE	3003-Bern	Switzerland
Keiner	Marco	Senior researcher	ETH Zürich, IRL-Institute	8093 Zürich	Switzerland
Kellenberger	Marco	ECP Switzerland	Federal Office for Spatial Development ARE	3003-Bern	Switzerland
Koutsouris	Alex	Professeur	Agricultural University of Athens		Greece
Langus	Klemen		Lto Bohinj (Local Tourist Board) Municipality Bohinj	Triglavska Cesta 35, 4264 Bohinjsk, Slovania	Slovenia
Leitz	Antonia	Team Coordinator	JTS Alpine Space Programme	Stadt Rosenheim, Postfach 1209, D-83013 Rosenheim	Germany

Löffler	Wolfgang	Spatial Planning Officer	Office of the Provinical Government of Niederösterreich, Department of Spatial Planning and Regional Policy		Austria
Macchi	Gianfranco	Consultant in Spatial Planning	Comunita Montana della Carnia		Italy
Machold	Ingrid	Senior researcher	Bundesanstalt für Bergbauernfragen	Marxergasse 2, A-1030 Wien	Austria
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Marty	Peter	Geschäftsleiter Schweiz	Hochschule Wädenswil	Grüental, Postfach 335, 8820 Wädenswil	Switzerland
Mehlbye	Peter	Director	ESPON Coordination Unit		Luxemburg
Miklavcic	Tomaž	ECP Slovenia	Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning -		Slovenia
Naidenov	Valery	Director Regional Policy and Management Systems	Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works	17-19 St.St.Syril and Methodius Str., Sofia, Bulgaria	Bulgaria
Nazzaro	Concetta	Assegnista di ricerca	University of Sannio (Benevento)-Italy	Via delle puglie, 5 - I-82100 Benevento	Italy
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Perlik	Manfred	Interreg IIIB Diamont & NFP 54 Sustainable Scenarios	Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Forschungsstelle Gebirgsforschung	Wettsteinallee 75, 4058 Basel	Austria
Petite	Geneviève	Collaboratrice scientifique	Groupement suisse pour les régions montagen (SAB)	Seilerst. 4, 3001 Bern	Switzerland
Rollando	Angela	Director	GAL Appennino Genovese S.r.l.	Via Roma, 11/4, I-16121 Genova	Italy
Roos	Georges T.	Director	Roos Office for Cultural Innovation Trends & futures	P.O. Box 7738, 6000 Lucerne 7	Switzerland
Ruffini	Flavio	Head Institute for Regional Development and Location Management	European Academy Boleano	Via Druso 1, I-39100 Bolzano	Italy
Rumley	Pierre-Alain	Director	Federal Office for Spatial Development ARE	CH-3003 Bern	Switzerland
Santarossa	Luca	National Contact Point	Ministero Infrastrutture e Trasporti	Via Nomentana 2, I-I00161 Roma	Italy
Schad	Helmut	Dozent	Institute of Tourism at Lucerne School of Business	Posslimatte 48, 6002 Luzern	Switzerland
Schild	Peter		Federal Office for Spatial Development ARE	3003-Bern	Switzerland
Schleicher-Tappeser	Ruggero	Acting Secretary General of the Alpine Convention	Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention	Herzog-Friedrich-Strasse 15, A-6020 Innsbruck	Austria
Schnell	Klaus-Dieter	Wiss. Mitarbeiter	Institut für Öffentliche Dienstleistungen und Tourismus (IDT-HSG) an der Universität St. Gallen	Dufourstrasse 40a, 9000 St. Gallen	Switzerland
Schuh	Bernd		OIR	Oesterreichisches Institut für Raumplanung	Austria
Schwarz	Claudia	Consultant	Ifuplan, Institut für Umweltplanung, Lendschaftsentwicklung und Naturschutz	Riederstrasse 16, D-80999 München	Germany
Shucksmith	Mark	Project Leader of ESPON 2.1.3 "Territorial Impact of che CAP"	University of Newcastle upon Tyne, School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape,	Claremont Tower, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 7RU,UK	United Kingdom
Sidler	Adrian Urs	Wiss. Mitarbeiter	FH Nordwestschweiz, Institut für nachhaltiges Management, IfSM	Zürcherstrasse 1202, 5210 Windisch	Switzerland
Spiekermann	Klaus	Senior researcher	Spiekermann & Wegener	Stadt- und Regionalforschung; D-44137 Dortmund	Germany
Stalder	Ueli	Senior researcher	Schweizerische Arbeitsgemeinschaft für die Berggebiete (SAB)	Seilerstrasse 4. 3001 Bern	Switzerland
Strubelt	Wendelin	Vice-President; Professor	Bundesamt für Bauwesen und Raumordnung (BBR)	D-53179 Bonn	Germany
Thüring	Manfred	Senior researcher	Institute of Earth Sciences - SUPSI	C.P. 72, 6952 Canobbio	Switzerland
Valentini	Monica	Researcher	Centro d'Ecologia Alpina	Loc. Viote del Monte Bondone, I-38060 Garniga Terme (TN)	Italy
Wespi	Yvonne		SEREC, Swiss Association for the Service to Regions and Communities	La Rey, CH-1660 Château-d'Oex	Switzerland
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Annex C: Analysis of the Feedback Forms

MONTESPON Seminar 5./6. September 2006

Question 1: How useful was the Seminar for you in general?

Total answers: 12

3 of 12 -> excellent / extremely useful (25%)

6 of 12 -> very satisfactory / very useful (50%)

3 of 12 -> satisfactory / not especially useful (25%)

0 of 12 -> rather poor / not useful at all (0%)

Question 2: Which part of the Seminar was the most useful for you?

Total votes: 23

7 votes for "Presentations on day 1" (30.4%)

2 votes for "Workshops on day 1" (8.7%)

0 vote for "Plenary discussion on day 1" (0%)

1 vote for "Evening program" (4.3)

9 votes for "Presentations on day 2" (39.1)

3 votes for "Workshops on day 2" (13%)

1 vote for "Plenary discussion on day 2" (4.3)

Question 3: Did the given information meet your expectations?

Total answers: 12

3 of 12 -> excellent / extremely useful (25%)

5 of 12 -> very satisfactory / very useful (41.6%)

4 of 12 -> satisfactory / not especially useful (33.3%)

0 of 12 -> rather poor / not useful at all (0%)

Question 4: Would you have preferred certain information to be more emphasized?

Total answers: 12

4 of 12 -> No (33.3%)

8 of 12 -> Yes (66.6%)

The program in general -> 1 vote (7.1%)

Project success stories and best practice -> 4 votes (28.6%)

Strategies, studies… -> 2 votes (14.3%)

Individual project presentations -> 4 votes (28.6%)

Other -> 3 votes (21.4%)

- Relationship between ESPON and Interreg projects
- Statistical aspects and problems
- About the new programme

Question 5: Please evaluate the possibilities of exchange with other projects / persons during the Seminar:

Total answers: 11

3 of 11 -> excellent / extremely useful (27.3%)

8 of 11 -> very satisfactory / very useful (72.7%)

0 of 11 -> satisfactory / not especially useful (0%)

0 of 11 -> rather poor / not useful at all (0%)

Question 6: At which occasion did you practice this exchange mainly?

Total votes: 16

6 votes for “during the workshops” (37.5%)

3 votes for “during the evening program” (18.7%)

7 votes for “during other occasions” (43.7%)

(primarily lunch / coffee / breaks)

Question 7: Do you think it would be useful to organize more thematic exchange events?

Total answers: 12

4 of 12 -> excellent / extremely useful (33.3%)

7 of 12 -> very satisfactory / very useful (58.3%)

1 of 12 -> satisfactory / not especially useful (8.3%)

0 of 12 -> rather poor / not useful at all (0%)

Question 8: Which issues do you think would be useful for further thematic seminars?

Total answers: 7

More practical

EU structural funds' approach and support to specific areas including mountain areas

Statistical needs to territorial indicators. Key indicators from ESPON to territorial analysis and policy

Influence of national regional development policies, compared across Europe. Focus more on strategies; less analysis

Small cities network; tourism; landscape / cultural heritage management; services in mountain areas

Relationship between ESPON and Interreg projects

More presentations on areas different from the alps

Question 9: Are you satisfied with the organizational frame of the event?

Total answers: 12

12 of 12 -> Yes (100%)

0 of 12 -> No (0%)

Question 10: Any suggestion / comments?

Total answers: 4

- Thematic exchange events might have a geographic focus, as well, in more detail – e.g. Central Europe, Southwestern or Southeastern Europe, Alpine region, Balkan region etc.

- The way to get in the seminar room: better indicated!

- Maybe short(est) cv of the speakers in the program?

- Not very connected ESPON results and Interreg project / goals