An interpretation of the challenges facing Alpine policy and development

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Major global influences affecting the Alps

- climate change
- changes in the energy market
- economic globalisation
- knowledge economy
- sociodemographic change (ageing)
- increased mobility of goods and people

The different types of areas affected

- metropolitan centres
- Alpine cities
- stable or growing rural areas
- declining and shrinking rural areas
- tourism areas

Source: Gloersen et al, 2013.
Four key aspects of the challenges facing the Alpine arc

1. Diversity:

The Alpine arc is a mosaic of different spaces.

Demographic evolution of alpine communities 2001-2010.

Source: M. Perlik, EURAC
2. Operational scales:

While some areas of the Alps are part of the globalised economy, others remain very localised.

Access time by car to nearest regional service centre

- Less than 15 mn
- From 15 to 30 mn
- More than 30 mn

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3. The “shrinking” Alps:

*Can the Alps exist outside the areas of metropolitan development?*

Employment in metropolitan centres 2001-2010

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4. The vitality of the Alpine image:

The popular image of the Alps is one of action and attractions.

Variation in in-place private-sector salaried jobs in localities in the French Alps 1993-2007

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Three keywords for meeting the challenges facing the Alps

1. Reorganise

- Capitalise on diversity;
- Rethink the relationship between different areas;
- Consider the Alps in terms of dualities: upper and lower altitudes, protected areas/urban areas, north and south … -

2. Anticipate

- From periphery to model
- After the Promethean model and territorial model
=> A hybridization model?
3. Experience

- To gain insights into the manner in which inhabitants live and experience a space, conceive it and use it;

- To create the conditions for a relationship that is sensitive to the environment;

- To conceive a space in an area that can be controlled and appropriated;

- To conceive a space to which one can become attached and which helps build an identity;

- For a mountain area that can be “lived”

- For a mountain area that promotes living together!
Thank you for your attention!

Bibliographical references:


