

## Proposal from the Veneto Regional Council to continue the Alpcity Project

This proposal gathers together some of the ideas on how to continue the Alpcity project in the new 2007-2013 planning period.

These notes also take into consideration the proposals that have emerged from the contributions given by the partners in the Alpcity 2004-2006 project, which they presented over the last few days.

The new planning season for the European Union will last for seven years from 2007 to 2013, and provides a number of policies and actions that concern the Veneto region and which will have a significant territorial impact.

The Alpine Space programme will continue to finance the projects as part of the *territorial cooperation* objective, which falls in the sphere of *sustainable growth* and *cohesion*. As we all know, the future plans are strongly orientated towards the Lisbon objectives, the Gothenburg priorities and the EC cohesion policies.

The areas that have been proposed for the transnational PO Alpine Space project are:

- Italy: the regions of Friuli Venezia Giulia, Veneto, Trentino Alto Adige, Lombardy, Piedmont, Liguria, Val d'Aosta.
- Slovenia: the whole of the country.
- Austria: the whole of the country.
- Germany: the districts of Oberbayern and Schwaben (in Bayern), Tübingen and Freiburg (in Baden-Württemberg).
- France: the regions of Rhône-Alpes, Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, Franche-Comté, Alsace.
- Switzerland: the whole of the country.
- Liechtenstein: the whole of the country.



*Proposed areas for the transnational Alpine Space Project. Source: European Commission, DG Regio.*

The continuation of the project requires **an integrated vision** with the EU policies and, in particular, the ability to adapt to special challenges and opportunities in the various territories, looking for the right balance between thematic and territorial priorities.

There are three thematic priorities in the “regional competitiveness and employment” objective and, in broad terms, in the “European territorial cooperation” objective:

- **Innovation and economy of knowledge,**
- **Environment**
- **Access** to the services (transport and telecommunications)

Alongside these thematic priorities there are the territorial priorities:

- **Sustainable urban development,**
- **Renewal in rural areas,**
- **Renewal in fishing areas,**
- **Areas that have geographic or natural disadvantages.**

The “European territorial cooperation” objective aims at strengthening cross-border cooperation, transnational cooperation and interregional cooperation, together with a good exchange of experience at territorial level.

## **STEPS AHEAD**

Therefore, on the basis of the above, to continue the project we need **to reinforce the practical effects** of the work that was carried out in the previous period, emphasising the OPERATIONAL PART, we feel safe in saying this as it seems to be a common opinion expressed by the partners in the recent meetings (Pra Catinat, Venice).

However, it would be a good idea if the practical actions were preceded by a moment of reflection on the most significant outcomes of the first part of the project and their possible effects.

This reflection could be organised on two levels:

- 1) **INNOVATION:** selecting the most innovative features of the actions that have already been implemented, addressing future work towards the same objective.
- 2) **THEORETIC AND SCIENTIFIC ANALYSIS:** explaining the conceptual assumptions that the themes can be based on and shared with, to then arrange the structure of the new contributions from the partners (as the contribution from Franche Comtè also seems to suggest).

In our opinion, cooperation between partners would help closer sharing of a **transversal** theme which involves the entire Alpine area and could be extremely important within the objectives fixed by the EU (*Lisbon-Gothenburg*).

## **Proposal for a transversal theme**

The Veneto Regional Council has always been very attentive to problems involving **territorial planning**, especially the planning procedures that duly consider *European directives*.

The territorial planning traditions and extensive preparation work that the Veneto Regional Council is carrying forward for the new PTRC offer the chance to identify methods and best practice for sustainable territorial planning and to gather and interiorise new ideas and experiences from Italy and abroad. In fact, Regional Law 11/2004 “Regulations for territorial government” expressly

considers “coordination of regional situations with national and European development policies” as one of the fundamental aims that are pursued by urban and territorial planning instruments.

This is what the Veneto Regional Council reasoning and proposal is based on, certain that a top-down/bottom-up exchange can be established in the *relationships between urban and regional territorial planning and the European Union policies*.

*The Alpine areas with their various problems and specific development opportunities present fundamental questions to territorial planning.* We feel it is important to grasp the opportunity of the Alpcity project, which involves several Alpine regions, to try and offer the EU policies new instruments to review and specify territorial policies, that are increasingly more precise and effective, especially for the Alpine areas.

Therefore the transversal objective of the proposal is to help reflect on the possible meaning of **territorial planning** in the Alpine area.

## **Background**

Certain experiences by the Veneto Regional Council are behind these reflections, which could be a good background to start from and also a good motive for analysis:

- **POLY.DEV. Project** – Interreg IIIB – CADSES – 2000-2006 planning
- **Comelico East-Tyrol transnational plan**

The **POLY.DEV. Project** – which will terminate in October 2007 – relates to “Sustainable polycentric development in the Cadses area” and aims at promoting transnational exchange on matters relative to territorial planning and polycentric development in the areas of Central Europe, the Adriatic, the Danube and the Southeast.

The project involves studying the relationship between rural and/or naturalist areas and urban areas, through coordinated territorial planning actions for their polycentric development. The main objective at transnational level is to strengthen the managerial ability of regional and local institutions in territorial planning, which will lead to a common integrated strategy of polycentric sustainable development in old and new partner countries in the CADSES area.

The **Comelico East-Tyrol transnational plan** was drawn up by the Territorial Planning Department of the Veneto Regional Council, and is one of the few experiences in Planning for vast areas that was implemented in cooperation with a bordering country, and involves the mountain areas of Comelico (Italy) and East-Tyrol (Austria).

Each region with its specific administrative, geographic and socio-economic features could make an important contribution to this fundamental theme for the European Union, including in view of the new ESDP as well.

We would like to place the following questions:

- Does planning still make sense in the Alpine area, and how? Does planning in marginal areas or areas with unbalanced development make sense? With which tools?
- What advantages could be gained from planning at transregional/transnational level?
- What specific knowledge is required for planning in the Alpine area? (e.g. according to Franche Cômte we should know more about the small Alpine towns and their development trends).
- What role can transnational cooperation play (see GECT and Euroregions)?
- How can the best practices in mountain area planning be effectively exchanged?
- How is the urban-rural relationship declined in the various Alpine areas (central theme in EU policies)?

## ***Proposal for organising the theme***

Each PP could arrange its work in two parts: the first general part, organised with a common structure; the second part tuned to the specific interests and needs of each single partner or region involved, which should represent a specific analysis according to individual nature and needs.

### 1. General part

This part should be the link between the partners, a valid motive for exchange and the guarantee that the project outcomes can be compared. Implementing an organised method as given below could already be an interesting and common outcome, which could be proposed as study material for the continued development of effective and adequate EU policies. A common summary publication could be arranged as an intermediate outcome of the project.

- Identifying the planning methods in the Alpine area in each PP region (features and problems).
- Recognition of the regulations and government instruments in the area.
- Identifying any transnational planning cases (best practices).
- Critical collection of data and literature on anthropicised Alpine areas and their planning and management in each PP region.

### 2. Specific part

The specific analysis part should be proposed by each partner, but below there are a few examples that the Veneto could be interested in:

- Territorial planning role and instruments in the **economic development of Alpine areas**.
- The contribution of planning in maintaining **services** and **quality of life** in the mountain areas.
- Planning methods and instruments to conserve **rural and urban building, traditional landscapes and new landscapes** in the Alps.
- The role of planning in **cooperation** among mountain areas and small towns to grant sustainable development of the area (see planning instruments for vast areas).