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PROCEEDINGS





Local endogenous development and urban regeneration of small alpine towns

AlpCity Project Final Conference

PROCEEDINGS

organised by



Consorzio Pracatinat
Fenestrelle (Piedmont, Italy)

October 16th 2006



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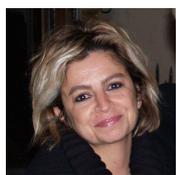
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AlpCity Final Conference: background and objectives

The **AlpCity Final Conference** was organised in Pracatinat (Fenestrelle, Piedmont – October 16th 2006) in the framework of the AlpCity Project (Interreg IIIB/Alpine Space Programme) by Piedmont Region, AlpCity Lead Partner.

This trans-national Conference represented a project final key event, during which AlpCity (2003-2006) was widely presented in terms of concrete results towards the original project strategies and foreseen activities.

A special focus was developed on the overall project experience in terms of challenges and lessons learned by the eleven project partners as well as the experts of the Scientific Steering Committee, the consultants and the different stakeholders involved in the project implementation.

The ambition of this meeting consisted in the set-up of a platform for presentations and discussions in view of a potential prosecution of the AlpCity Project.

Institutional bodies such as the Alpine Space Managing Authority, the Joint Technical Secretariat and the National Contact Points were invited as key presence for the Conference. They provided the audience with their contribution in terms of programme/project evaluation and relevant inputs for its future.

Other key participants were: all the project partners, the SSC experts and institutions involved in the AlpCity



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implementation (universities, NGOs, research institutions and some case studies' local counterparts). Representatives of CIPRA, Alpine Convention and ISCAR were invited to attend the meeting together with the representatives of the other Alpine Space Programme projects in synergy with AlpCity.

The main sessions of the Conference was in line with the structure of the Project Final Report, which presents the results of the project related to its core activities, namely: 21 pilot cases, the Best Practices database and guidelines, and the final project recommendations at a strategic level.

Agenda

October 16th 2006 - Morning plenary session (9.30 h /13.00h)
Moderator: Daniela Sena, AlpCity Project Manager

9.30 10.00	Registration to the meeting	Participants
10.00 10.15	Welcome and official opening of the Conference	Sergio Conti Councillor Piedmont Region
10.15 10.30	The Italian participation in the Alpine Space Programme	Fabio Croccolo Italian National Coordinator of the Alpine Space Programme Ministry of Infrastructure
10.30 10.45	The participation of Piedmont Region in the Alpine Space Programme	Tiziana Dell'Olmo Representative of the Interreg IIIB – IIIC Programmes Coordination Office Piedmont Region
10.45 11.00	AlpCity: from a project idea to innovative actions and proposals	Maria Cavallo Perin Piedmont Region Officer
11.30 11.45	The development of small Alpine/mountain cities: challenges and problems of the AlpCity Project	Marie Christine Fourny Kober Scientific Steering Committee Coordinator
11.45 12.30	AlpCity Case Studies: achieved results and lessons learned 'Economic development' 'Services and quality of life' 'Urban environment' 'Cooperation among towns'	WPs Coordinators Maria Luisa Dagnino Lombardy Region Hubert Trauner Provincial Government of Lower Austria Pierpaolo Suber Friuli Venezia Giulia Region Colette Gras Plouvier Rhône-Alpes Region
12.30	Open discussion	Participants



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October 16th 2006 – Afternoon plenary session (14.30 h/17.30h)

Moderator: Daniela Sena, AlpCity Project Manager

14.30 14.45	AlpCity Best Practices framework: achieved results and future scenarios	Carlo Socco Coordinator Observatory on sustainable cities
14.45 15.00	AlpCity project: an overall evaluation and lessons learned	Loredana Alfaré and Manfred Perlik AlpCity Scientific Steering Committee Experts
15.00 15.15	AlpCity final recommendations	Maria Cavallo Perin Piedmont Region Officer
15.15 15.30	AlpCity experience and the new crossborder cooperation	Andrea Ezio Canepa Piedmont Region Officer
15.30 15.45	AlpCity and the Alpine Space future programming period: 2007- 2013	Ivan Curzolo AlpCity Project Officer Alpine Space Joint Technical Secretariat
15.45 16.45	Open discussion	Invited to intervene: Alpine Space NCPs, MA, JTS, CIPRA, ISCAR, UNCEM, Alpine Convention, Alliance in the Alps, L'Alpe Review, Italian Ministry of Economic Development
17.15	Closing session	Maria Cavallo Perin Piedmont Region Officer

Welcome and official opening of the Conference

**Daniela
Sena**

I welcome all the participants in this Conference and I thank them for sharing this important stage of the AlpCity Project, also because many of them come from cities and regions very far from here.

I would like to thank above all Mr. Boris Zobel, Director of the Pracatinat Consortium and his collaborators for their support and hospitality in this facility.

My name is Daniela Sena, I have been the AlpCity Project manager for two years and on behalf of Piedmont Region I am very glad to inaugurate this special event. Piedmont Region has acted as Lead Partner of this Project involving eleven partners from five different countries.

AlpCity is a European co-financed project implemented in the framework of the INTERREG IIIB Alpine Space Programme. This event represents an important occasion for Piedmont Region, all the partners, the AlpCity Project Scientific Steering Committee (SSC) experts, all the actors actively involved in the implementation and the success of this project, not only because it is a good occasion to share and exchange the project results, but also because it underlines our great satisfaction after working with zeal and passion during the last three years.

I have the pleasure to welcome Mr. Croccolo from the Ministry of Infrastructure, Italian national coordinator of the Alpine Space Programme.



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During this day I hope we will be able to collect inputs and relevant information from several speakers, who have accepted to be here to give their contribution about the future of the AlpCity Project, on which Piedmont Region, the different partners and the SSC experts have already been working with a time horizon marked by the new programming period (2007-2013).

I am very glad to be entitled to play as moderator of this event; we face three main challenges today: to be able to summarize in one day the results of two years of hard work; to be able to clearly communicate them to subjects directly involved into the project as well as to ones following it simply as observers. The second challenge consists in respecting the limited time to reach the purpose of summarizing all the work in just one day. I will ask all the speakers for their collaboration in order to enhance a quick prosecution of the Conference. The third one is, at the same time, a challenge and an invitation addressed to all the actors involved in the AlpCity Project and related to the future of this project. It consists in catching all the inputs proposed by the different speakers to be shared and to be discussed in view of the project prosecution.

I would like to briefly talk about the choice of the Conference location, here at the Pracatinat Consortium of Fenestrelle. We have worked a lot on small alpine and mountain towns: so the Final Conference takes place on mountain, in a very interesting and peculiar location with the Fort of Fenestrelle nearby. The second reason is that the Pracatinat Consortium has been actively involved in the AlpCity Project, since it worked together with the Interuniversity Department on Territory of the Polytechnic and the University of Turin during the implementation of one of the AlpCity case studies,

regarding the legacy of the Winter Olympic Games. The third reason relates to this facility and to its interesting transformation, because from sanatorium it was converted into a teaching laboratory on environment; a laboratory for a sustainable society. I think that all this tallies with the AlpCity Project activities and objectives.

I would like to express the greetings and the best wishes for a productive and fruitful work day from Mr. Vincent Kitio, officer of the United Nations Habitat, who took part into the AlpCity Scientific Conference, held in Milan in June 2005. He participated as officer of this important international institution, which has been implementing a world programme focussed on Best Practices and urban sustainable development for ten years. Vincent unofficially disclosed the successful result of the AlpCity candidature to the '2006 Dubai International Award for Best Practices to Improve the Living Environment': our project has been selected as a Best Practice among more than 700 candidatures.

Now I invite Mrs. Maria Cavallo Perin to speak; she is an officer of Piedmont Region and is in charge of the AlpCity Project, apart from being its author. Mrs. Cavallo Perin will open the conference on behalf of Piedmont Region.

**Maria
Cavallo
Perin**

Welcome to the closure of this project, on which we have been very keen for about three years. Mr. Conti, Regional Councillor charged of this project should have been here to open this Conference.

Unfortunately he has been involved in very urgent problems; for this reason he asked me to read his opening speech. Mr. Conti is Regional Councillor for Spatial Planning; he has followed this project only since May, but his philosophy deals



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with the skill to enhance spatial development and growth through supporting endogenous development. We followed the same way of thinking during the start and the implementation of our project, when we were inspired just by the integrated approach of the European programmes.

Opening speech of the AlpCity Project Final Conference by Mr. Sergio Conti, Councillor for Spatial Planning of Piedmont Region

**Sergio
Conti**

Dear ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of Piedmont Region I am very pleased to give you my hearty welcome to this important event dedicated to endogenous development topics and regeneration of small alpine towns.

I take the opportunity to greet all the participants, the authorities from the Italian Ministry of Economic Development and the Italian Ministry of Infrastructures, the officers of the Alpine Space Joint Technical Secretariat, all the AlpCity Partners, all people involved into the project and all the attendance.

The Alpine Space, to which the whole day of reflection and debate is dedicated, represents for Piedmont Region not only a reference area, but also a particular engagement and responsibility. The AlpCity partnership reflects the naturalness of our relationships with a part of Europe, so rich of culture, traditions, suggestions and important territorial specificities. Well, I believe – as we showed through AlpCity – that we should take place at a different and more ambitious level.

This important event together with the numerous contacts, which will be organised during these days, represents a propitious occasion to outline our expectations and to listen to and think about the inputs we will receive.

Our dialogue and the prospect to intensify relationships between Piedmont Region and the other participating European authorities rest on a no evadable basis: the real strengthening of the partnership. They have to start from the shared acknowledgement that the taking root of common institutions and of a climate favourable to exchange and transfer of best practices is the best guarantee for prosperity, social and economic progress.

Moreover, a backward glance at the beginning of the AlpCity Project confirms the extraordinary path covered by the partner countries on this side. A path often bristling with difficulties characterised by a great deal of encouraging progress followed sometimes by stalemates. However, the whole trend is unambiguously positive and it justifies optimism. Also thanks to the work and to the ever-growing forms of collaboration with UNCEM, CIPRA, the Alpine Convention and Alliance in the Alps – just to name some of them. AlpCity actively supports its cooperation with all these initiatives and aims at being an influential forum for the policy debate at the Alpine Space level.

Considering the success of the project, acknowledged at local, national (with the award of a 'Merit Acknowledgement' on the occasion of 2006 Sfide Competition within the Forum PA), European (with the



mention of 'Successful story' during the 2006 Alpine Space Summit) and international (selection as Best Practice by the United Nations Habitat on the occasion of the 2006 Dubai Award) level, it is clear that the undertaken way is the right one. It should become irreversible. It is necessary to work with this attitude in order to comply with the common efforts towards the search of a real sustainable development, respectful of an environment, whose inestimable value will never be sufficiently praised. Sustainable development is the most effective form of defence against natural disasters and the best tool for a real contrast action against depopulation and social-economic decay.

If the operational step of the next programming period has to take these criticalities into consideration and to start actions characterised by a rigorous selectivity and the territorial concentration of investment, it must be underlined that in the Piedmontese experience the integrated planning method has enhanced (also among the sub-regional public authorities) a positive orientation towards planning and investment evaluation, apart from letting a precious culture of the inter-institutional cooperation sediment.

In other words, shared action priority should be outlined without producing biasing effects, by avoiding resources concentration on redundant actions. On the contrary, it must be intensified 'the effectiveness of the specific actions, which influence different aspects of the faced problem and so the development of adding and/or multiplicative effects should be favoured'. Consequently the next programming period (2007-2013), characterised by a financial resources availability slightly inferior if compared to the past, will impose the

definition of criteria for the optimal resources allocation to be performed through the coordination and integration of the European, national and regional resources.

In front of these challenges and according to the European experience, the issues of regional integration and partnership surely represent the winning solution. However, the path towards integration does not develop only at the institutional and political level. Integration goes above all together with a growing dialogue among the actors involved, both institutional and belonging to the civil society. A balanced integration means empowerment also from the point of view of cohesion of aims and applied practices. For this reason, I consider with favour and support all these 21 case studies, which have been put in place with a different ripening within the AlpCity Project.

I am also persuaded that a deeper and involving dialogue with the European Union established institutions is extremely useful in order to create forms of integration more and more advanced.

Without forgetting a more international prospect through the achieved results and the planned agreements in cooperation with the United Nations Organization and particularly with Habitat and its Best Practices and Local Leadership Programme. In this direction I think we should strengthen the debate on spatial development without excluding themes and sectors.

For what concerns the negotiations for the proposal to set up an interregional Laboratory for the Alpine spatial



development, about what Maria Cavallo Perin (officer in charge of the AlpCity Project) and Daniela Sena (AlpCity Project Manager) will speak more in detail, I would like to reaffirm that the value of the agreement goes far behind the single issues. Moreover, I wish the conclusion of a high profiled agreement, so to build a concrete, effective and lasting collaboration among the Regions, which already showed a good capacity to work together.

If the relevance of collective action forms within a regional context is acknowledged, it is possible to infer the general trends guiding the new period of economic and spatial planning:

- a. Defining the network of excellent functions by foreseeing ways to increase the value of the widest range of vocations and resources (productive, technological, environmental, cultural ones and so on), and also by recognizing the local planning skills and by remarking the local identity peculiarities. The red line consists in investigating the polycentric structure of the regional territory and the key and critical elements, which will inspire the policy choice, considering that the financial resources are limited;
- b. Regeneration, training and reproduction of new social capital will be decisive through the promotion of integrated forms of planning (including sustainable social services; technological, mobility and environmental networks, etc.). The main objective is the increase of the spatial added value, connected to resources availability, to empowerment of competitive potentialities, to links

with supra-local economic, technological and environmental networks;

- c. Finally, the institutional challenges should be faced. The empowerment of the spatial action programmes cannot be divided from a new definition of the governance model, which foresees the strengthening of the participation tools and the incentives for cooperation.

The consequent objectives can be summarized as follows:

- Guiding the establishment of the regional polycentric structure: spatial government approaches and tools should be modified apart from the juridical-administrative structures of a Region, a Province and a Municipality. To tell the truth the most significant local unities cannot be identified into the individual municipalities, but into groups of municipalities, that “natural” families (with similar historical and geographical backgrounds) or, more often, “artificial” ones (with common strategic interests) formed by municipalities representing vital and dynamic areas, usually at a sub-provincial level, and characterised by a polycentric and scattered settlement structure. They are spatial organisations equipped with specific forms of socio-economic regulation, where the environmental, social and economic dimension are integrated. They cannot be envisaged into the regional level and into its bureaucratic and centralized tradition;
- Enforcing the “concertation” mechanisms among the different decision-making levels, by substituting the hierarchical relationships among “usual” institutional levels (essentially Regions and Provinces as place of representation and coordination) with a



cooperative/contractual approach of the individual spatial and institutional levels; the Region should be entitled of a dynamic and constructive dimension, which shows itself through the consensual assent to a common management programme for shared problems by a group of local communities;

- *Pursuing coordination and integration among regional sectional policies by considering that, sectional and spatial regulation forms meet just at regional level;*
- *Mobilising not yet allocated resources and creating institutional contests and relationships aimed at increasing their value: this action will allow, on one side, to face the problem of social equity through inclusion and not through redistribution; on the other side, it will allow to increase the spatial added value through the social capital reproduction;*
- *Reaching a substantial revision of regional spatial policies, which goes beyond present and past bureaucratic, regulation and "dirigiste" criteria. At the same time it would be a mistake for Regions to be assigned a residual role in comparison with the tasks of municipalities and their aggregations (in so doing there would be the risk to restrain the regional strategic function by allowing a consequent growing competition among municipal authorities). The objective consists in outlining institutions and tools, which can favour: a) local cooperation, b) coordination among municipalities, c) an agreement among the municipalities belonging to a local system and d) among the group of local systems and the whole Region. The tool is an institutional contract among spatial bodies, which ratifies the voluntary belonging of each local system to a wider regional*

network of strategic interactions and to a larger spatial cooperation project (that is the opposite of bureaucratization and technicalization).

So Piedmont Region will continue lavishing each possible effort in order to strengthen a multilateral regional agreement. I wait for the results of this meeting and of the AlpCity Project partnership one (which will take place tomorrow) just for drawing up some conclusions and indicating a path of further dialogue and collaboration.

Then we will work to build an agenda, which has to be first of all feasible and accountable. Even if there are evident difficulties imposed by constraints and restrictions of our public authorities, Piedmont Region's engagement is still anchored to the objective of favouring and supporting the strengthening of more and more tied relationships.

In the framework of the European Spatial Cooperation Piedmont Region is interested in the following actions:

- Creation, support and organization of policies for the western alpine space: the western Alps Euro-Region (cooperation between Italy and France and between Italy and Switzerland) in an open framework characterised by integrated polycentrism. This space lies at the crossing of the big eastern-western and northern-southern exchange flows with two important features: the maritime one and the mountain one. The objective of a both political and spatial convergence among the partner regions consists in firmly affirming their spatial and economic links to Central Europe and Mediterranean coast. This dynamic and cooperative agreement should*



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allow those Regions to fill the gap with the most advanced ones in Europe, in order to eliminate the risk of being isolated and emarginated;

- *The trans-national cooperation spaces (Alpine, Mediterranean and Central Europe Space) as targets of the regional strategic planning for what concerns spatial accessibility, connections to intercontinental networks and continental flows corridors, the development of new sustainable ways for transport (maritime highways, port networks, inter-modalities, etc.), the support to innovation and research, the environment protection (management of water resources, risk prevention, etc.), urban development.*

Piedmont Region should try and boost international cooperation through specific actions aiming at the creation of stable frameworks for monitoring, verifying and evaluating actions and projects oriented to development and, above all, to booming and spreading best practices.

I wish you a fruitful prosecution of this Conference works.

The Italian participation in the Alpine Space Programme

**Fabio
Croccolo**

I would like to thank you for inviting me today and for allowing me to be here on mountain for this special event. Apart from coordinating the Alpine Space Programme among the other ones, I like mountains both in summer and in winter: for this reason I always enjoy my time in such places; when I came out from the car I had the strange feeling to have been suddenly thrown into another age, into one book of Thomas Mann's. I think you wouldn't be able to find a better location.

Well, I will divide my speech in two different parts: the first brief one is on the Italian participation in the Alpine Space Programme during the current programming period. However, I would like to speak about future, because all of us are concerned with it and it is important to understand in which way we will go on.

For what concerns the Italian participation in the Alpine Space Programme you can see, in the following image, territory and countries involved. We have had 58 projects; the total budget reached €118 ml during the 2000-2006 period. As outlined in the Councillor's opening speech we won't be able to get the same amount for the Alpine Space next programming period within Objective 3, even if the whole Italian participation will likely be slightly increased in comparison with the past.

As you know there are three thematic axes within the programme: together with the Alpine Space National

Contact Point (I would like to thank Mr. Luca Palazzo) we developed a specific analysis on the different axes.



This analysis can be useful also to organise the future actions; it is very important to recall that during the only truly important Alpine Space political meeting, that is the Conference of Regions held in Lyon two years ago, the Alpine Space politicians clearly outlined transport and accessibility as first priority in the area. All the other themes remained on the fringe; however there has been a clear indication for policies. During these seven years we have witnessed a better capacity of proposing micro-projects, which are not suitable for transport. In few words there are better planning skills in all

thematic axes than in the transport one. Consequently the problem is how to reconcile a political priority with the capacity of proposing for the future.

To the whole programme Italy contributes for more than 40%. This is the first axis (spatial planning and competitiveness) and Italy participates in its budget in line with its contribution to the whole programme.

For what concerns Axis 2 (sustainable transport systems) the Italian contribution is clearly superior: half resources belonging to this axis have been absorbed by our country.

As regards Axis 3 (environment and cultural heritage), we have again a canonical percentage of participation.

In reality, looking at the final account, Italy has been able to play an important and interesting role, even if with enough strong coordination efforts and with the recent approval of a last strategic Transport Axis project, where Italy acts as Lead Partner and main character. Then we can legitimately ask why there is a trend to reduce the resources devoted to transport to 20% of the total amount, within the proposals for the next programming period. This choice makes a range of local administrative decisions and initiatives easier, but it is paradoxically opposite both to competition and to a political request. There are also questions about the connection links and the drive belts existing within our public authorities among the political priorities and the implementation skills we are provided with. According to me this is a very important aspect I want to remark.

As partner Italy keeps its position for what concerns the contributions to participate into the programme. This is justified by the fact that the Italian area is the widest one in the Alpine Space apart from its contribution and so we have more than 200 Italian participating partners, who represent



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37% of the programme. Also in this case we keep a similar percentage, and Italy gets its money back, even if there are partners coming from third countries; but this happens according to the spirit of cooperation.

Looking at public bodies, the main role is played by national, regional and municipal authorities, which these programmes are mainly addressed to. Participating operative bodies are closely linked: universities with a consulting role bring a very important know-how. I would like to add some concerning observation: within the programmes (the current Interreg and the future Objective 3) it is necessary that universities play a consulting role, without being project promoters, because projects have always to produce a spatial impact. Dealing with balance constraints there is the risk that funds devoted to established purposes could fill the shortages of other financing lines; so if someone is not able to be competitive on the seventh framework programme on research, he can draw money from the territorial cooperation funds in order to finance his research doctorates. This must be avoided: it is not an ideological preclusion, but universities can fulfil their function through consulting, supporting and providing the territory with their know-how. This is not a tool to finance the main activity of pure or applied research.

Some very important final data: against €44,6 ml characterising the initial Italian participation into the programme, the Italian absorption factor reaches €50 ml. All the projects have been approved and we have an implementation rate of 112% for the programme. This is the most significant information for Italy. In certain territorial areas the use of European funds is dramatically low if compared to the potentialities; the system is also very competitive and it is important to underline that we have been able to go far

beyond our expectations. These figures clearly show a successful element of the Italian system within the Alpine Space. The credit for this success belongs above all to the projects; in a competitive system the quality of the project is pre-eminent on the other choices. Obviously it intersects also with some political choices. If we do not start with good projects, no political positions can be supported: for this reason I am pleased to thank you for having proposed valuable and feasible projects. All this helped reaching the positive results.

Together with success we have also to outline some shadows, especially at the beginning of the programme, which slowly disappeared: for example the first call projects have been characterised by a lot of difficulties to transfer funds with the so called trans-national activities. We should avoid this kind of problems in future. I had the chance to speak about this during the consultation of the Alpine Space regions, also with the councillors of the different interested regions. We have to think that for trans-national activities all the financing part is diverted abroad without following accountable procedures, which exclude potential Italian suppliers. All this is clearly unacceptable. The situation has been improved thanks to the Alpine Space Programme management, but we want to take it into account in the future. A peculiar attention to cooperation methods and to the funds use will be extremely rigorous, because the best projects should get the money. These best projects have to be selected according to common European procedures of sound public authorities management: with great attention paid to the rules on public aid and public procurement, that is missing rules during the first step of the programme. There have been also other partner countries with national rules opposing the European



directives, which allowed them to avoid the public procurement simply because the projects had been selected within a trans-national committee. We have some impressive examples: a private partner entered an approved Alpine Space project with a contribution of €10,000; you know that contributions can have also an “in kind” form and the partner received some internal job order for more than €0.5 ml without any congruity evaluation and without any accountable procedure. I will formally signal these episodes to the European Commission; they cannot be accepted, because funds are again allocated in order to implement activities not consistent to the purpose, the same funds were assigned for.

But go back to the future. I appreciated a lot the Councillor’s accent on the different governance levels to be developed within the projects and programmes management, both in terms of planning integration, of financing sources integration, of projects systematisation, of policies integration and in terms of the need to have a contractual cooperation approach. One of the key elements for Italy (not from the point of view of resources acquisition, but certainly from the point of view of governance in Interreg IIIB Programmes during the current programming period) is constituted by the National Committees: at our national level all the interested actors have been invited to discuss. So Italy has presented a unified position as the result of an internal mediation of all the needs. A similar approach has been applied to the national strategic framework to prepare the future objectives: a *concertation* step, which produced important documents and a sort of common genetic heritage. For this reason they are now unquestionable. An outlined deficiency has happened during the translation of this contractual function from the

successful national level to the regional one. Sometimes there have been municipalities or provinces participating by themselves, without verifying the coherence of the projects with the regional development plans. I like the Councillor's words concerning this innovative approach in the governance through the creation of regional coordination committees parallel to the national ones, in order to take all the other demands into account. I think this is necessary to further improve the already excellent governance, we have been able to set up. We have to think to a future improvement: this is certainly a key element towards a bigger success. During the projects presentation, some areas or local authorities, potentially and strongly interested or involved in certain kinds of problems, have been excluded because of lack of information. Also in this case the use of this coordination tools as information means for the projects presentation allows to overcome the priority the network owned instead of the project content during the project presentation step. In other words the chance of having a formed network played as competitive advantage more than the project idea itself. A major information exchange and a major coordination allow to invert and to drive the planning step within the virtuous circle.

Two last elements about the future: the new Alpine Space Programme, which will be inserted in Objective 3, has being developed. Probably at the end of the first 2007 semester new calls will be launched.

Which elements should be still defined? Above all the national funds for the programme have to be established. Italy is very disappointed because of some programme partner countries' approach. According to some news of last week one of the key partner countries declared to have the will to



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reduce its own assigned ERDF resources and to reduce the co-financing percentage as regards the programme technical assistance. Technical assistance is vital for the programme, because it allows bodies to work and to be coordinated. Italy cannot accept similar conditions as lead programme: it could drastically reduce the participation in absolute terms, in terms of co-financing, in case these opportunistic behaviours continue being implemented. It is politically unacceptable that after a six months negotiation a country expresses the intention to reduce to 15% the co-financing for the technical assistance, even if it knows it is the main recipient of the technical assistance itself. Moreover we need a substantial respect of the spatial structure of the Alps: we heard about a Western Alpine Euro-Region from the Councillor's words. This means that Italy cannot accept a programme so heavily unbalanced and favouring the Western Alps. Italy comprises the Alps from the east to the west, all the Alpine Space: it wishes an alpine programme giving same dignity and same representativeness to the eastern part and to the western one.

Finally, it has to be a more transparent and competitive programme. For many reasons linked to the lack of transparency of projects impact indicators and evaluating procedures, we have had very poor projects together with extremely valuable ones, with a great spatial and extensive impact, with a spin-off role for other projects and for the policy-making. I recall an impressive project devoted to the study of bats migration across the Alps. We cannot accept the support of this kind of projects through this tool any more. Projects have to be serious, concrete, like AlpCity, producing real benefits on the territory, useful to increase the territorial value and that can be integrated through the structural

policies. In a more and more competitive scenario due to the reduction of public finance resources and to the improved skills in using the tool by the public authorities, we will select projects, which are innovation-oriented and pilot actions. Moreover they must own a solid background in the structural policies of the territories, regions, municipalities, in order to become a real heritage. In the past we had projects ending with websites, which have never been updated after the project conclusion: this cannot be accepted. The capitalisation of the results of an Interreg project is one of the most essential elements in order to allow other related projects to be financed. It is clear that Objective 3 is not a tool for permanent policies, but for innovative policies and it should be implemented for this purpose. The more local authorities will be able to develop synergies (as the Councillor said about the integrated policies), the more they will be able to incorporate tools to their policies. From this point of view, Piedmont Region got an excellent performance: I think about Medocc with the IdroProject, which allowed the creation of a network for the meteorological protection against flooding in the region. So the amalgamation with the structural policies will represent a selecting key element for new projects.

I think I gave sufficient indications about the future: a competitive future, but potentially rich of satisfaction. Italy has an excellent starting point; there is a strong will to do and to build; we have to be coherent in our choices and rigorous in our evaluations, in order to engage the Objective 3 funds in the best possible way. We face an economic problem; economy doesn't work according to absolute values, but to relative ones. The problem doesn't consist in the project production itself. The problem consists in the possibility to get better productions with other projects by using the same



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limited resources. This is the target we should necessarily aim at if we want to enhance the growth of our country and of the Alpine Space.

The participation of Piedmont Region in the Alpine Space Programme

**Tiziana
Dell'Olmo**

Thank you very much to all the AlpCity staff, because through AlpCity you have implemented a project, Piedmont Region is very proud of.

I give you also the greetings of the Arch. Mariella Olivier, officer in charge of my office within the Councillorship for Spatial Policies, which takes care of coordinating the programmes of trans-national and interregional cooperation for the 2000-2006 programming period.

I would like to start by saying that my speech content will overlap Mr. Croccolo's one: he focused on the national level, while I will analyse from a regional point of view. I will briefly recall the three priority axes of the current Alpine Space Programme; then I would like to give a picture of the Piedmont Region experience during the 2000-2006 period; in the end I would like to outline the 2007-2013 programming period. Moreover, Piedmont Region is directly involved in the programme governance, which is a system set up in order to establish the new 2007-2013 Programme: so we can offer some adding elements.

There are several projects in the Alpine Space, which Piedmontese partners take part into. As Piedmontese partners I mean Piedmont Region as body, but also many other ones at regional and local level, such as provincial and municipal public authorities, universities, parks, chambers of commerce and so on. There are 13 projects with a Piedmontese



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participation on Axis 1; 4 projects on Axis 2 (the one devoted to transport, about what Mr. Croccolo widely spoke): I share all the developed considerations, because it deals with a very strategic axis for the area. In my opinion, the most important difficulties emerged, because the programme enhanced a large application of the bottom-up approach (as requested by the European programming method): since such a strategic axis asks also for a political coordination (top-down), it hasn't be possible to develop good projects and to maximise the use of the transport axis. Maybe this will be a reality during the next programming period with a very different referring framework. Then there are 12 projects on Axis 3. A total number of 29 projects and a total amount of received funds (ERDF and national ones) about €7.5 ml, which revealed to be a very good performance if compared with the other Italian regions.

We prepared also a classification according to transversal themes: so the financed projects can be spread into four categories or thematic areas:

1. Local development and competitiveness with 13 projects, which are mostly very bottom-up projects regarding the development of sustainable tourism, or promotion of typical products, of the cultural and local heritage, innovation and new technologies, support to the development of small and medium-sized enterprises.
2. In this category we have included projects with a specific relation to territorial policies and spatial planning, belonging to Axis 1. One of the most important framework for the trans-national cooperation during the 2000-2006 period is the European Spatial Development Scheme missing in

the new programming period, which refers especially to the Lisbon and Gothenborg strategies, that is to a sustainable development, but above all to knowledge economy and innovation.

3. Transport and accessibility: 4 projects
4. Environment and protection of environmental resources; risk management and prevention: other 8 projects. We have worked almost well for this theme; we have formed (particularly for the risk prevention) some promising trans-national technical networks, which will be further developed during the next programming period.

All these considerations constitute a sort of balance of the programming and we tried to involve also the projects partners. We made a survey, through a self-evaluation questionnaire not only for the Alpine Space Programme, but in general for all the trans-national and interregional programmes, Piedmont Region takes part into. We got interesting evaluations, which can be summarised as follows: first of all a positive whole evaluation of the experience and this is certainly not so obvious.

The mainspring for the will to cooperate at a trans-national level has been the interest in working into a cooperating system, the wish to know and approach different environments, different ways of working and the learning and the development of new methodologies and tools. The achieved results, according to the project partners' self-evaluation, are consistent with the initial expectations and implied the acquisition of know-how and experiences. There is also a negative side, which is well-known among the participants into trans-national projects, concerning administrative and financial procedures, which have



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represented real obstacles for the project management and the activities development: the main request is certainly a simplification of the administrative and financial procedures for the next programming period, together with the need of major support and guidance in the projects design, in the relative search for partnerships more coherent with the project.

All this information are included in a publication, finalised some months ago, which collects all the projects financed within the Interreg III B and III C Programmes and characterised by Piedmontese partners. There is a card for each project; the total projects number is 75; to tell the truth other three Medocc projects were added later on. So we have a sort of balance of the experience of the current programming period in view of the new one.

I would like to tell something about the new programming period, just to give you the general framework, because I think that Mr. Ivan Curzolo from the Alpine Space Programme Joint Technical Secretariat will then develop further considerations. The main change consists in the promotion of the trans-national cooperation and in general of the European spatial cooperation, which has been transformed from European initiative into priority objective of the Structural Funds; in this sense it has been inserted in the so-called main stream of the Structural Funds programming. It will become the future Objective 3, while Objective 1 and Objective 2 still remain similar to the current programming with the only difference that Objective 2, reserved to all the no-Objective 1 regions and to all no-late-in-development regions, will include the current Objective 3, which concerns the European Social Fund Programmes.

Other new information concerns Piedmont Region: in the next programming period the Alpine Space Programme is confirmed together with Medocc, which will be called Mediterranean and will involve all the Mediterranean Coast. But Piedmont Region entered also the Central Europe Programme and for the first time we will have the chance to measure ourselves with all the Central and Eastern European countries, from Germany to the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary: for us it represents a big challenge.

This is the new European framework, which constitutes the basis to define the new operative programme, starting from the two main strategies, all the programmes financed through the Structural Funds have to refer to: the Lisbon Strategy and the Gothenborg one. The basic Regulations for the next programming period have already been published and made official; in particular the General Regulation on Structural Funds and the ERDF one. Last week also the European Commission's strategic guidelines have been published: they concern Structural Funds and spatial cooperation. For the next programming period also the national strategic framework, as Mr. Croccolo remarked, has been an important benchmark to test a governance system, which will be implemented and developed during the whole next programming period; this national strategic framework represents a national picture, even if regions developed also a preliminary strategic document, which has being revised for the Structural Funds. So the same model has been re-proposed at the regional level. During a period lasting more than one year regions, national public authorities together with economic and social groups have worked hard in order to develop this framework for all the Structural Funds, included the national strategy for the European territorial cooperation.



Then the individual representatives of the different programmes have the task to make related strong proposals. For what concerns trans-national cooperation we have 4 priority thematic areas defined in the art.6 of the ERDF Regulation, which establishes the areas eligible for the new trans-national cooperation:

1. innovation
2. environment
3. accessibility
4. sustainable urban development

Here one of the main principles of the programming can be remarked, that is the thematic concentration, even if in reality the new programmes are not so different from the current ones for what concerns themes, because almost all those ones currently financed will be confirmed also in the future. However the approach and the implementation method will be very different.

A brief outline also to the definition procedure of the new Alpine Space Programme, started at the beginning of 2006; a task force has been created; a group of trans-national coordination, which gave guidance to the definition step and 3 working groups to face the various programme aspects. In particular on Piedmont Region's behalf I take part in the working group 1, which takes care of the programme contents definition. Some contacts with the European Commission took place: it expressed some informal advice about the drafts submitted; a complete draft have already been posted on the programme website. I think that many of you have already given it a glance; it was published on the 14th of August. The foreseen roadmap implies a final decision of the task force by next Friday. Mr. Croccolo outlined some negative elements, which have also recently appeared, but

which have already emerged during the working period. In spite of all those problems the programme should be approved on the 20th of October and introduced to the European Commission at the end of November in order to get its approval in a few months. After this approval there will be a period to define in detail all the necessary documents for the first call launching (the application package and the specific implementation rules).

I can make a brief summary on the programme objectives based on the programme draft published on the 14th of August; to tell the truth last week there has been another meeting of the work group 1, which revised the draft on the basis of the ex ante evaluator's comments and of the European Commission's ones. For this reason, the document, I refer to, has been already changed and can be further modified. There are 5 programme objectives. The fundamental key elements of the strategic approach for the next programming period are the capitalisation of the results of the past experience; the involvement of the most important and competent actors together with the political involvement, in order to get a guarantee of effectiveness of the results and their impact; reference and direct integration with the regional policies as already outlined by Mr. Croccolo. Relying on endogenous resources in a transversal way for all the programmes: in other words themes are shared by all European cooperation programmes. However, we can increase the value of, use, manage and protect all the Alpine Space specific resources. Then there are some transversal basic principles: some of them comes out from the European policies, like the principle of opportunities equality, the sustainable development, the environment. Some of them



need form and content more than words like the integrated and innovative approach. This one will be our next task.

I would like to quickly recall priorities: competitiveness and attractiveness of the Alpine Space, accessibility and connectivity, environment and risk prevention. As you can see themes are not so far from the current programme, but the approach substantially changes.

In order to give a further outline to the programme implementation strategy in the future, I would like to underline that something has changed for what concerns the programming documents, since there won't be the programme complement any more, because the programme essential elements are already included into the operative programme, which is approved after the Commission's decision. Afterwards there will be some documents addressed to the project applicants in order to guide them during the projects design and management. A very important element for the next programming period is represented by a more top-down approach instead of the bottom-up one. The latter is certainly very interesting, because it enhances the bottom planning skills, but it is very difficult to build a system, to design projects, to verify projects utility and their coherence with the regional planning together with their impacts on it. This means that it is also necessary to make project results more effective: so the approach becomes more proposal-oriented and pro-active; a major support to project applicants during the projects presentation phase. The calls will be divided into two phases based on the terms of reference of each call; the first project ideas will be selected and then invited to present a real application form; afterwards projects will be selected. The terms of reference will explain more in detail what already

included in the programme Axes; the Programme Committee will guide the programme implementation and also the calls; it will be able to decide and to drive the projects towards the themes considered as fundamental for the programme. A key element of the new projects is the trans-national added value: this word is already included in the current programming, but there are no criteria to really evaluate it. Now, this means that programmes cannot overlap each other and the financed activities should produce an added value in relation to the inclusion into a trans-national cooperative programme. Also the need of some concrete results is very important; even the kind of implemented activities has to be more concrete in order to set up a structure, which will survive to the project itself. For this reason studies are not encouraged than for very specific projects. Other key elements are: the involvement of decision-makers, politicians and key actors of the territory, of development policies; the complementarity with other funds and programmes. Piedmont Region is persuaded that this will be the right approach.

Mrs. Cavallo Perin read our Councillor's speech and we want to undertake this direction. Our future engagement goes towards the set up of a regional governance able to face this challenge and to build a system by following the approach of the new programming.



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AlpCity: from a project idea to innovative actions and proposals

**Maria
Cavallo
Perin**

I wish to thank all the partners, because they helped us facing a very difficult project. What I remember about the birth of this project is the complex set up of the partnership. I went to Lyon just to meet the officer in charge of the programme, who told me: "*Madame, travaillez!*"; afterward I started working. I explained my idea to him and he found it interesting, but as he suggested, a lot of efforts had to be put in place to set up the project structure. In fact it took more than one year for the preliminary work. During this year Piedmont Region tried to set up the project partnership; in this sense I think that the added value can be traced into the capacity of AlpCity to put together the two alpine souls, the western and the eastern ones. These two souls were generated by different historical circumstances, and as Mr. Croccolo said, the eastern countries dominated this programme, because they have a more advanced experience. For this reason, I thank particularly our eastern partners, which worked with us with great interest and transferred a lot of knowledge and work capacities. We are aware as Piedmont Region that we have a gap in terms of sustainable development and of guaranteeing a high income in the marginal mountain territories. We represent a region, which hosted the Winter Olympic Games, but still has extensive areas characterised by economic difficulties. The relationships with the eastern

countries helped us a lot learning the process of know-how transfer.

The project initial phase was very difficult, because of the need to set up a partnership not around some specific objectives (like building the technical network to be protected from avalanches or from climate problems), but with the idea to discuss the possible policies of development for the Alps. In a certain way AlpCity has been a precursor of the new programming philosophy, where regions and partners are invited to discuss and to share policies. This is the second element I would like to enlighten, because we had a lot of difficulties in communicating. Our work language has been English and we used it with great technical hitches; in any case we were able to face the themes linked to the alpine development. In order to speak about a common and integrated approach to the sustainable spatial development according to the established criteria, we have thought about concepts and concrete ways to face and launch spatial policies. This determined a strong awareness in my experience, in my Region and in my AlpCity work group. Ms. Daniela Sena came from different experiences; she had never been concerned with mountain topics, but now she is a real expert of our themes. She was able to build a team skilled to manage a so difficult project, because she has created this capacity of transferring and matching among partners. Within Piedmont Region there is a growing awareness of the big potentialities of the Alps for the European future. The Alps as natural, cultural and scientific heritage. For Piedmont Region, which owns 90% of municipalities with less than 5,000 inhabitants, equal administrative opportunities have a particular meaning, because the alpine territory is very fragile and has a very big administrative weakness. It is very



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interesting to have the chance to see how other municipalities in Austria, Germany and France have followed very peculiar development models, we can learn. Our experience represents a great result from the point of view of a partnership of seven regions, belonging to Eastern and Western Europe, which want to go on working together through the set up of stable cooperation structures. Apart from the possibility to get some funds again, we realised that the real problem consists in the demolition of more barriers than the custom ones already eliminated within the European Union. Above all I refer to administrative barriers, for example when we speak about the European defined rules on contracts and public works, we have to remember that they are declined in each country in a different way like also in each region. In this sense a lot of obstacles should be eliminated; they are administrative barriers linked to historical developments of national countries and regions, where they are still deep-rooted in our way of working. In my opinion this aspect is fundamental: to create shared and permanent structures to work together in order to overcome administrative, procedural and language barriers. When we started working together, we tried to find a common work language for the Alps, because Italy could not impose its language so as France, which obviously claimed French as the alpine language. We decided to use English as the work language in the Alps, even if it does not belong to the Alps. We had to choose an official work language with the objective to develop our communication skills by targeting high-level professions. Young people have an extraordinary capacity to communicate and they have been the most important vehicular element of the project; they were very

fond of the project and easily communicated on the concepts and on the case studies.

Only some brief considerations just in the opening phase of the Conference, because I think they are useful to give a perspective to our work. Later in the afternoon we will deal with the final recommendations and conclusions.

**Daniela
Sena**

I take the opportunity to speak about other two important side initiatives promoted within the AlpCity Project.

One of them has been launched by the Mayor of Grainau, AlpCity Project partner, who proposed and organised a school exchange between Grainau and Turin.

The other one is linked to the art in the public authorities offices: a young painter of the Arts Academy painted on canvas in the offices of Piedmont Region, inspired by the AlpCity Project.

We go on with our work session by reviewing activities and concrete results of the AlpCity Project.



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The development of small Alpine/mountain cities: challenges and problems of the AlpCity Project

**Marie
Christine
Fourny
Kober**

I would like to express the point of view of a scholar, by generally speaking about the project and the method applied by this programme. We will try to understand something more about the small town, which has been the object of this project. I have been entitled coordinator of the Scientific Steering Committee, but today I would like to speak autonomously. My speech hasn't been submitted to the other experts; so I could not get any consent to my text; it exclusively deals with my personal opinion. However, all the observations derive from a collective work; for this reason I presume that all the other experts of the Scientific Committee will agree with me. The title of my speech is "Challenges and problems of the AlpCity Project": I have chosen it, because for the first draft Ms. Sena proposed the same title I used for the Scientific Conference of Milan, "A challenging framework: crisis and resources of the small alpine and mountain towns". In the Final Report there is also a first part drafted by the Scientific Steering Committee with the title "Cadrage problematique": crises and resources of the small alpine towns". To tell the truth it is useful to reconsider the themes, we analysed at the beginning of the project, but I think it could seem a repetition to speak about exactly the same topics developed during the introductory conference.

I talked to my students about research; they got a very clear definition of researcher: a person, who searches, searches, but who never finds; otherwise he could not be a researcher any more. Well, I do not give this impression, also because reality is quite the opposite: the researcher is able to find if and only if he poses the right questions, that is the questions he is able to answer. So I decided that it could be better to talk about problems, but less about the problems of the small towns and more about the sharing of common problems. We know that these common problems represent our red line, which enhanced the AlpCity public usefulness and justifies its prosecution.

At the beginning we started with the small alpine town; in the very first general partners' meeting in Turin the experts were asked to provide a definition of the small alpine town with its problems, just to verify the meaning of the project objectives. The first question was very embarrassing for the experts, because there are not established statistical definitions; some geographical definitions have been searched for decades together with the differences between small, medium and big cities; but without any quantitative rigorous definition. Another source of doubt came from the fact that the small town is not object of scientific analysis; only big cities, metropolises, global cities and international cities are topic for studies and debates. Nobody speaks about the small town; only one report was drafted in the European Union about the theme, but there are not recent important news. Of course there are as many definitions of small town as many countries; different regional ways to define a mountain town; and also local definitions of identity and life quality in these small towns. The last, but not least, problem is the political question, even if the scientific aspect could be pre-eminent; it is right to



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find objective criteria to define the small town, but we have to consider the administrative organisation. The European Commission included already other non-alpine mountains; so it is more correct to speak about mountain and not alpine towns. When we asked about the nature of an alpine town, the AlpCity partnership has already been formed with people facing concrete problems, who wanted to work together. We should have started with some definitions of the number of inhabitants (between 1,000 and 5,000) of the small alpine town; the minimal schooling infrastructure; the demographic peculiarities; the necessity of a participative procedure. Probably the project could not be implemented with too many conditions. So the definition of small town couldn't be the right way to face the question, even if it could be rigorous from a scientific point of view. The scientific justification is not necessary; the pertinence of the problem depends on the local actors, who pose the problem according to their objectives, their life experience and the way they define and feel the problem. We faced the project partners, not a pre-existing and homogeneous community of small alpine towns. They just shared common development problems and asked the Scientific Steering Committee to put some order, without using restrictive criteria for the small town. They wanted to build something useful for all the Alpine Space to be shared and exchanged. All the work of the Scientific Steering Committee focused on the clarification of the shared problem, its formalisation, the introduction of a number of hypothesis in order to get transferable results. The Scientific Steering Committee reached this formulation: in this AlpCity Project there were needs and a strong will of self-development. This appears today as more important than the existence of a crisis. At the beginning we spoke about a crisis

of the small town. Maybe a cultural and identity crisis. To tell the truth the majority of the AlpCity partners' towns doesn't experience a crisis. Rhône-Alpes Region leads a statistical study on the small mountain town and it is evident that there is no direct correlation between small mountain town and crisis, from an economic point of view. On the contrary they are engaged in process of endogenous development characterised by a specific implementation. This specificity is related to their dimensions (small towns) and to their isolation; so we go back to the most typical mountain problem. However this specificity is related also to a strong will of cultural and political autonomy: this topic has widely been developed during the last three years. The small towns affirmed many times that they want to survive. Sustainable development is mostly conceived as related to the territory, more than to the environment. Sometimes small towns are forced to be autonomous: when the small town is not dependent from a big city, it remains outside the flows of metropolisation. Another common feature regards resources and the main common resource is just the mountain. I don't want to speak about mountain identity, because this term is misused and unclear. I am very interested in what identity allows to build and how it can be transformed into a resource. So we can speak about an identity resource: this can supply a cultural surplus to products; this establishes the economic value of an heritage; a positive image of the collective relationships; the attachment to the territory. Mountain in AlpCity can be summarised as follows: unity at a resource level. All the partners have this common object, with a cultural value and resources founder. The central question of the project dealt exactly with this: in which way a local area can transform the cultural value of its environment into a



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resource, when the space cannot define the terms of value. The attractiveness of mountains and their products/activities is today linked to intangible values. It is not the local aspect, which defines the value, but it wants to control this transformation and this know-how from an economic, cultural point of view. At this stage they do not need experts, but tools to get an internal capacity of control. In order to enhance this transformation it is necessary to build a territory. I don't mean the set up of a new structure, of a new institution, a new box, but the introduction of solidarity, the definition of a common interest. So this small mountain town can acquire the necessary tools to get this control on the transformation and AlpCity worked about the idea of a network, a database, best practices. All these means are useful to set up a certain solidarity; in the building of territories there is also this project idea, a common project, a regional project, where networks are formed in a particular area, a mountain area in this case and fight for a common idea belonging to that area. This common interest focused on a shared space through the links to mountains and sustainable development. Later on Mr. Perlik and Ms. Alfaré will develop a scientific summary of the project; I think the definition of the project problem by the Scientific Steering Committee and the Partners is very interesting and positive, also because the Committee played a very special role if compared with other Interreg projects. We tried to supply a continuous evaluation, which is not implemented in the other Interreg projects. Evaluation is not only administrative and financial, but we have been able to evaluate the project base from a substantial point of view. This approach allowed us to transfer knowledge, to exchange it and also to stray from the particular cases: this way of working has been real exemplary.

Today we heard about the next programming period and I think that AlpCity is already on the right path. We can follow the new indications, but we can already consider AlpCity as a strategic project; in fact we went beyond the collection of interesting case studies and their local spin-offs. We tried to generate also a development capacity; this is the very important asset apart from the features of the participating local authorities. As researcher I would like to tell that it is necessary to set up a common knowledge for the small alpine town, otherwise the generalisation of the operative value would be limited. I hope new actions will be put in place in order to analyse the Alpine Space: to simplify relationships it is necessary a work on knowledge; the alpine towns have to be laboratories for the sustainable development, where policies and evaluation tools can be successfully applied. In this sense research is essential.



AlpCity case studies: achieved results and lessons learned

Economic development

**Paolo
Corvo**

I will read the speech prepared by Mrs. Maria Luisa Dagnino from Lombardy Region, coordinator of the Work Package 5 on economic development. The participants in this Work Package are the municipalities of Grainau, St.Maurice and Tschlin; Lombardy Region with the case studies of Valcamonica, Valvestino and Dazio (Province of Sondrio); Piedmont Region with the municipalities of Pragelato and Prali. In this package the economic development can be considered as transversal; it concerns all the territorial resources, also involved in the other packages. There are mountain material and immaterial resources like the landscape and environmental quality of these place, agriculture, handicraft traditions, marketing of goods and services, residents' competences, their entrepreneurship and their skills as employees. For what concerns economic activities, which imply some service like trade, the target for a successful initiative has to be found in the population's composition and their habits. In our case studies we observed many employees, who lost their job: they needed a training also to develop their entrepreneurship. This revealed to be one of the most important aspects. From a methodological point of view, analysis has been implemented according to a traditional form through data collection, but also through sample surveys in form of

interviews and questionnaires. All the actors and groups of interest involved into the local development have been invited for auditions and surveys according to the principle of the participated planning. It is important to underline the transversal character of the actions favouring the economic development in comparison with other kinds of initiatives. In most of the case studies analysis it was necessary to implement actions of integrated planning in order to ensure a lasting economic development. Not only in one economic sector; just in the AlpCity objectives we can find tourism and trade closely interrelated. An interesting aspect of the project regards the search of the red line connecting this package with the other ones, in order to show a sort of homogeneity of approach. For what regards the link with 'Work Package 8 – Cooperation among towns' we have to remark that mountain population is scarce and we should create more synergies. A system should be set up including all the different environments, which can become more meaningful and relevant. It is quite easy to speak about such an idea, but it is very difficult to put it in place. For what concerns 'Work Package 7 – Urban Environment' it is clear that the quality of the urban environment together with the quality of natural places are key elements for tourism. For this reason an adequate and harmonious development of the town, the improvement of the value of the traditional house typologies and, in general, of the architectural heritage, apart from an adequate regeneration of the open-air urban areas are key promotional factors for the development of the economic activities. Finally for what concerns 'Work Package 6 – Services and Quality of Life', we can think about the aged mountain people, who are not so skilled. Services should be adapted to the residents' needs, but they can also be factors



acting for an economic re-launching if planned as user-attractive ones. In this way real virtuous circles can be created for the local economic development. Even if we take aged people into consideration, it is necessary and useful to attract other groups of population, for example young entrepreneurs. This could be another interesting task to be fulfilled. From this work other two key points can be outlined: first of all, the sustainable development of tourism as an opportunity to increase the value of local resources. Tourism should be sustainable everywhere and this is true particularly for mountain areas, because of the specificities of the mountain territory. Second, trade and handicraft as service activities, but also as factors attracting towards and promoting the local products and the territorial resources. For what regards tourism we can rapidly outline the local enterprises in St.Maurice, Grainau and the case of Tschlin, where after the functional regeneration of an abandoned building a concert hall has been opened. There is a great effort to strengthen territorial identity: in this case Tschlin as music centre, which can be considered an attractive tourist factor as well. Then in Pragelato and Prali, as you know, the effects of an important event have been analysed: the Winter Olympic Games as opportunity for development, but also as threat for the landscape and the local economy. In this sense the tourist development is ambivalent if carried on according to established criteria and characteristics. Trade and handicraft: the cases of the municipality of Grainau, of Valcamonica, Valvestino, and of the municipality Dazio. The initiatives increase the value of trade range from the promotion of urban areas to the identification of experimental selling modalities to ensure supply services to all the resident population, to multi-functional shops (which have

been created in other European countries and within AlpCity in Lombardy Region and Grainau). All these actions aim at preserving existing activities and then at launching new ones. There are short-term and long-term initiatives. The participated planning is an interesting methodology: the local population's involvement is important, but in certain places it works very well thanks to open-minded local authorities, to existing crisis due to booming events or to strong depopulation. In other cases it is more difficult, because there are major efforts to find an agreement, where the situation is tricky. The participated planning should be implemented more correctly in a pre-crisis phase. For what concerns the future I wish this project prosecution. Moreover the cooperation among public officers, professors and researchers has been one of the most interesting element, as shown in this Work Package, in spite of the initial problems. In my opinion, a lacking factor is the entrepreneurial spirit to start experimentations; it can be coupled also with low-skilled labour force. It is necessary to produce some changes in the way of thinking of the local population, accustomed to working as employees. There is no adequate dissemination of model to imitate: for this reason the transfer of best practices through AlpCity represents a very important tool for inspiring development. There is scarce will to cooperate and to associate with the aim at promoting initiatives: so it is necessary to multiply those kinds of efforts. I was born in Lombardy Region and I know that our valleys, our local actors find very difficult to work together. Even if resources are scarce, it could seem almost impossible to integrate common initiatives and inputs. This is the biggest challenge: I can say that before AlpCity all these prospects seemed impossible; but now they can be still complex, but feasible.



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Services and Quality of life

Hubert Trauner

I would like to give you a meaningful picture about Work Package 6 on Services and Quality of Life, I have been the coordinator of.

My name is Hubert Trauner and I come from Lower Austria; the experts for this package are Mrs. Loredana Alfaré and Mr. Michael Tyrkas. I am pleased to thank them for their collaboration and their support. I am going to describe the objectives and then I will provide a general analysis of the AlpCity Project; afterwards I will conclude with some common aspects and some final considerations. For what regards the main objective of this package, it is correct to speak about the promotion and implementation of an integrated and sustainable development implying the population's participation. The key point of the package is concerned with a long-term endogenous development based on the resources of the local economic development. Another very important objective has been the problem solving approach to be transferred through a bottom-up approach, with the experts' and neutral moderators' help. I would like to underline that the bottom-up approach and the top-down one are not opposite and incompatible, because the application of a bottom-up approach doesn't necessarily mean that the upper levels have no decision-making power and all the others can do what they want. It is important to indicate the direction, to create frameworks, within which decision have to be undertaken. Finally, the Scientific Steering Committee experts evaluated the whole process and the pilot cases; then they drafted some recommendations addressed to the partners. This Work Package has been

characterised by 7 case studies belonging to three partners: the municipality of Grainau, Piedmont Region and Lower Austria. For what concerns the individual results: in the municipality of Grainau we tried to increase competitiveness in the tourist sector; we organised some workshops, where many ideas were proposed; some measures have already been implemented, other ones have being drafted, other ones wait for their implementation. It is important our request for a change of the way of thinking among the local population: it cannot always wait for the local public initiative; it has to be pro-active and the growth process has to go on. The second case study focused on excursion path; there were three paths: the geological one has been completed; the one characterised by territorial names and the experience one will be completed in 2007. Then we have the Zugspitz card, which offers the chance to visit places by using public means of transport. All the preliminary works have been fulfilled and we presume that in May 2007 the project will be completely implemented. Finally we have a school exchange: schoolboys from Grainau have already visited Turin in July 2006 and in February 2007 schoolboys from Turin will go to Grainau. In Lower Austria we set up two thematic networks with the participation of different towns: one involves young people and the other one regards public libraries. Six towns belong at the moment to the first network: they exchange experiences and transfer know-how. Many other towns expressed their interest to participate together with many institutions; so in autumn 2006 a conference of the youth will take place with all of them. The importance of libraries has been increased: in Krems, after a meeting, the creation of a new library has been decided. The problem there consisted in the fact that the free participation



produced only interest, but no effective members. Setting up these networks we are persuaded to attract new members for the future. In Piedmont Region we wanted to create a new school model obviously linked to the mountain territory in order to get some professional skills coupled with sport, environment, local culture and foreign languages. Also in this case we observed a change of the population's way of thinking, even if people were very skeptical at the beginning. For what concerns the common aspects all the participating partners understood that the best results could be achieved through the promotion of networks and participative processes. In this way the local actors can be involved together with the resident people: in so doing it is possible to get a general consent, apart from the revival of interest. All the projects had the following common aspects: the efforts to improve public-private partnerships, planning with the involvement of citizens, a more transparent decision-making process, a guarantee of sustainability for these processes. Other common aspects were the following ones: the improvement in the process quality, the creation of efficient networks and the collaboration to involve local actors into the local initiatives. Then, we can add the importance of lasting and sustainable processes, the positive role of external experts and consultants as neutral mediators. For the concluding considerations it is important to remark that the coordination process took a long time; above all the administrative engagement has been relevant, but the implementation of such projects is certainly satisfactory. The trans-national work and the accessibility to the AlpCity Project created advantages and opportunities, not only to evaluate the own national process, but also to be compared with other regions and to learn from other experiences. In this way



there is a real matching of the problems of the small alpine towns and it is possible to find rapid, best and effective solutions. We have to consider that the transfer process of experiences can assume different forms; it was possible to learn from the other partners, translate their experiences and maybe integrate them in the own systems. One of the most important experiences within this big network including 11 partners and 5 countries is that everything can work if there is the will of all the partners and a competent Lead Partner. Also the international success of AlpCity showed the excellent work carried on by Piedmont Region as Lead Partner.



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Urban environment

**Pier
Paolo
Suber**

My name is Pier Paolo Suber from Friuli Venezia Giulia Autonomous Region; the Work Package 7, I coordinated, included many case studies and partners. I would like to start from the general objectives established at the beginning of the project. The basic idea implied the promotion of processes of integrated development enhancing the sense of belonging of the various partners to the local communities. The second objective consisted in the promotion of a better understanding, a better awareness at the local level of potentialities and resources to be exploited in order to get a sustainable development. For all the partners these resources could be found into the traditional cultural and environmental contents of the territories involved into these projects. We reached the conclusion that all these objectives could be reached by improving the quality of our urban environment from the socio-economic, environmental and cultural point of view. In order to fulfil it we looked for some tools: a new definition of the urban spaces by keeping the identity peculiarities of those alpine settlements. To tell the truth the will to preserve and increase the value of local identity is common to all the work packages. The other important tool consisted in preserving, empowering and promoting the cultural, environmental and historical heritage of involved territories and towns, because it is the key element, a development project can be built on. Another tool, which can be integrated to the previous ones is the capacity to promote the territories through the set up of

networks and participative cooperation methodologies among the various actors of these pilot cases. The purpose has been the achievement of a general consent to the activities undertaken. The two last tools, I would like to recall, regard the regeneration of buildings with a historical and architectural value already existing in these territories. This is an important aspect to preserve identity and attachment to the environment by the resident population. Finally, the implementation of an integrated and multi-disciplinary approach, because in so limited environments it is necessary to enhance the collaboration among economic sectors, otherwise a development project could never take off in such problematical contexts. We developed 8 case studies: I will try and briefly summarise them. Friuli Venezia Giulia Autonomous Region took care of two pilot cases concerning two themes: first, the environmental certification of some very valuable territories, which could become a promotion tool for the economic development. The second one regarded a specific area (Val Canale and Val del Ferro) and the regeneration of border buildings abandoned and disused after the creation of the European Union with the elimination of national borders among Italy, Austria and Slovenia. Piedmont Region developed other two pilot cases: a feasibility study to regenerate an abandoned mountain hamlet and to re-launch it in a tourist way. The second case consisted in the definition of a methodology for restructuring and regenerating traditional buildings by implementing the famous environmental evaluation method known as AEBAT. Veneto Region carried on a study on the regeneration and the re-use of some typical traditional buildings known as *tabià* in the Province of Belluno; an interesting publication with a CD-Rom has been produced to describe all the details of the



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pilot case. Franche-Comté Region worked on two case studies: the first one regarded the preparation of some common guidelines defining an image of common development of towns and villages placed along the Jura Axis and particularly along the main road crossing the Jura upland. The second one consisted in the set up of a network of peculiar towns through the regeneration of the urban centres based on a shared scheme of spatial planning resulting from studies and analysis of a French partner. Then there is the municipality of Grainau, which carried on a case study on an action plan to improve the whole aspect of the village. Among the various objectives of this action plan we can recall the modified traffic routes in order to re-qualify the downtown and improve economic activities (trade and handicraft). For what concerns the common aspects among the case studies I would like to say that the red line is the effort to increase the sense of belonging and the local identity of the inhabitants of the territories involved into the project. This peculiarity has been widely discussed during the scientific conference of Milan, but I want to remark that it is the most relevant and pervasive aspect according to my opinion. There is a common vision for a territorial development based just on the identity of these places. There are also other two element we can find in each pilot case: the success of the local identity through the support to the cultural heritage, by regenerating the cultural roots of that place, which risked to disappear because of different socio-economic phenomena, like depopulation, settlement of new and previously unknown economic activities. Moreover, through the proposed activities with the case studies there was the aim at increasing the local planning capacity, which was often very low (in Friuli Venezia Giulia

Region) at the beginning of the project; but also the capacity to find the right resources necessary to carry on these projects. This last result has been particularly satisfactory in Friuli Venezia Giulia Region: in one of the two pilot case we have observed an inverting trend during the last three years. In general all the case studies have a perspective purpose of improvement and increase tourism; only in Veneto Region there was a more specific target. I can affirm that all the local populations perceive tourism as the unique incentive for the local development. I don't think it must be the only economic activity, but it can certainly be the engine for planning and development of these marginal areas; of course I refer to a soft kind of tourism, which can preserve the integrity of the environment. And the local populations are persuaded of the goodness of this model. Other common aspects are: an effort to improve the process quality, to set up stable networks among the local actors participating in the development and re-launching of their territories. The need to plan long-term projects is very important as Mr. Croccolo said, that is the capacity to link together parallel and consequent projects in order to have a long-term perspective for development. We are also aware that the presence of new production technologies doesn't modify the capacity of the territories to build up a new image. On the contrary the environmental characteristics and the recovery of cultural traditions can produce something unique, which can attract visitors and increase wealth and development. There is a common methodological aspect: the creation of a participative process. Without discussing the value of a bottom-up or a top-down approach, I would like to remark that the participative process is the principal tool to be applied in such difficult places. As Mr. Trauner said we



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realised also the importance of external experts and consultants, because they have an independent and original vision, which cannot be generate among the local populations always linked to tradition and old ways of thinking. An external expert is able to better evaluate potentialities and real difficulties: their role is fundamental to achieve objectives. For what concerns methodology we traced two different directions in implementing actions: on one side we tried to use a more operative approach by developing agreements, contracts and collaborations among local actors in order to act immediately with concrete and tangible effects for the population. The other strategy consisted in the definition of some guidelines to fix rules and to suggest future paths to be run in the objective achievement. I would like to add a personal consideration: it is true that one of the most important peculiarities of the European projects is the transfer of experiences and the exchange of lessons learned. I agree with this under the condition that the transfer regards concrete issues, results and not opinions. I think this will be fundamental for the next programming period.

Cooperation among towns

**Colette
Gras
Plouvier**

This Work Package is very specific if compared with the other ones; it is not always rightly understood. Rhône-Alpes Region carried on 21 consulting works for small towns and groups of villages. As regards this package we were driven by two of the Scientific Steering Committee experts: Manfred Perlik and Marie Christine Fourny Kober. We formed three thematic working groups; ours had to evaluate whether cooperation among mountain towns in the form of network could contribute to the sustainable development of mountain towns. Thanks to Rhône-Alpes Region we focused on three different mountain ridges; the Department of Belfort with the Belfort Massif didn't give any contribution and at the beginning it dealt with the gerontology networks. Franche-Comté Region joined the work group at the end of 2005 and it communicated only the first results of a study regarding its territorial organisation. Rhône-Alpes Region carried on its study in three different steps: first of all we took the studies of Insed Rhône-Alpes; then we launched a call addressed to 207 small mountain towns considered as employment poles by Insed in order to take part into the AlpCity Project; then we organised a sort of technical assistance service for some towns. We received a political reply, because mayors asked to be helped in their development process, to understand problems and expectations. Two regional meeting took place; today we have the mayor of a small village Bois sur L'ignon in Loire, Central Massif, who worked essentially on the heritage, on the Romanesque Middle-aged style. For what



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concerns Franche-Comtè Region, it carried on a research work on the regional territorial organisation, not only the mountain area, starting from an analysis of cartography about the demographic dynamics, the attractiveness of urban areas, the typology and the hierarchy of the small towns. The results and the lessons learned from the package regard the statistical knowledge of the small towns; this kind of research should be further developed at European level as Marie Christine Fourny Kober said. It is important to recognise the role of the small mountain towns, their situations, their needs and their problems. For what concerns the knowledge of small towns in Franche-Comtè Region the first results of the research have been integrated into the first programme of sustainable development and they will contribute to the 2007-2013 programming for regional policies; such policies are linked to the European programme, but also to the contrats de plan, to the contrats des projets état-Region. In Rhône-Alpes Region the first results of Insed allowed to launch the call among all the small towns; a deeper analysis will bring to a Rhône-Alpes Region-Insed publication. At the moment only a 4-pages abstract about the preliminary study is available. These case studies mainly involved French partners with the support of the Scientific Steering Committee: we wish to create a network among institutions, involved actors, research laboratories, universities in order to coordinate a research programme. In Rhône-Alpes Region the small towns would like to exchange information at European level on the chance to group public and private services, the development of new activities, urbanisation and habitat problems, mobility, transport and public transport, cycle tracks. The participation of the population in the development strategic projects should take second houses

and resident population into account. Budget problems are also very common not only for small, but also for bigger no mountain towns. At European level they would like to organise common projects on heritage, bio-diversity, medical corps training. All this emerged in our region from some studies within European programmes like Urban. They ask for means to drive innovation and experimentation at public-private level and then for support to investment and technical assistance. In Rhône-Alpes Region there are already some regional policies answering the needs of the small mountain towns; we can think about the contrats territoriaux, which have been implementing for many years; or about the regional natural parks, which work as partners of Rhône-Alpes Region. Moreover a regional mountain policy will be very soon implemented. For what regards the lessons of the package: we realised there are many problems, but the works of the packages should allow to get more results for the sustainable development on mountain. Small towns need the acknowledgement of their problems outside the region.



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Afternoon Plenary Session

**Daniela
Sena**

In this afternoon session we focus on another Project Work Package dedicated to the best practices and too the AlpCity final results. Before dealing with this topics I would like to invite Mr. Ivan Curzolo here to speak. Mr. Curzolo is the AlpCity Project Officer by the Alpine Space Joint Technical Secretariat.

AlpCity and the Alpine Space future programming period 2007-2013

**Ivan
Curzolo**

First of all I would like to thank Piedmont Region and Mrs. Cavallo Perin, Ms. Sena and all the staff for having invited me. I give also the regards from the Alpine Space Joint Technical Secretariat and particularly from Ms. Antonia Leitz, who followed the project during its initial phase. Antonia is now together with Mr Thomas Fleury with the Coordination Unity within the Secretariat. Many of the things, I would like to tell you, have already been included in Mr. Croccolo's and Ms. Dell'Olmo's speeches. So I will try to give some indications emerged during the project implementation and which we tried to transfer at the programme level. In the end I will give some suggestions about this strategic draft on the future of AlpCity. We know that the Alpine Space can encounter 7 member countries. For the 2000-2006 programming period the Interreg IIIB Alpine Space Programme got a €118 ml budget, with €60 ml coming from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). 58 projects have been approved and all the available resources for new projects are now exhausted. There is a last call to present proposals, which concerns already approved projects; they will be financed through the ERDF, which is divested at programme level, because the concluded projects did not reach a 100% expense. Through these resources it will be possible to finance further activities of dissemination of the projects results. You can find all the information on our website. AlpCity belongs to Measure 1.1; it



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has been lasting for two years and half, from April 2004 to October 2006; with a less than €2,5 ml budget, with €1.100 ml provided by the ERDF. The Alpine Space Programme is one of the 13 trans-national cooperation programmes of the European Union. During some meetings organised by INTERACT, the programme which provides technical assistance to Interreg Programmes, a study on specific indicators (for results and impacts) especially for the new programming has been presented. There is a great added value of the Interreg projects; it consists in the capacity to set up networks, even if it is very difficult to quantify their value at European level or simply at the programme one. Network itself is a very intangible concept. For this reason a new approach has been introduced, the so called social capital approach, just to be able to measure the capacity to set up networks and to support the existing ones. The different programmes will use specific indicators to measure the social capital. There is a wide literature on the social capital both in sociology and economics. I would like to recall that the social capital has been referred to in the Councillor's opening speech and so it could introduce a new perspective to measure results and impacts of the Interreg programmes. I tried to apply these indicators to AlpCity: the involvement of the local actors through the search and the collection of best practices has been very relevant. Another key point is the constitution of the Scientific Steering Committee, which allowed to distribute and spread knowledge validated from a scientific point of view. The idea to create and organise this Regional Urban Observatory as an umbrella organisation able to coordinate the local urban observatories is also a very positive project element in the effort to strengthen new and existing networks. Finally the idea of a constant synergy also

with regional operators by providing technical assistance to local actors and networks: also this element could open new horizons for research and practical application of the new programming period. I would like to give some indications about the evolution of Interreg. During the programming period '94-'99, when the Interreg trans-national strand was identified, there has been an important focus on the network set up and on the information and knowledge exchange, both at regional and local level. In the current programming period the directives of the European Spatial Development Scheme tried to be put into practice; the projects impact level has grown, but there is still a lot of work to do in order to involve actors at national level, especially decision-makers. Also at the end of this programming period this strategic approach has emerged and it will be further developed in the future by enhancing an horizontal (all the countries of the alpine ridge) and vertical (local, regional and national actors) involvement. Interreg will become a mainstream objective; it has to follow the indications emerging from the guidelines of the Lisbon and Gotenborgh Conferences. It is compulsory during the project design to think about studies, their financing and the chance of their concrete application. Interreg won't finance studies any more, if there is no clear indication of the modalities to apply their results. This morning I was impressed by the large amount of Piedmontese municipalities with less than 5,000 inhabitants. It is important for the next programming that local authorities think about possible synergies and strategies to become a critical mass; they will have an impact at national level if and only if they belong to networks. This is an important element together with the relevance of developing synergies between rural and urban environments. These indications emerge also from the



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European Commission and from the national (Italian and others) strategic framework documents drafts. I would like to outline the so called perspective study, which has been approved and distributed during the Stresa Summit. In the next programming period there will be three priority axis, which substantially are similar to the current ones. I recall only that in Axis 1 spatial planning is lacking just to send a signal of greater concreteness to the projects, which will be approved. Axis 2, which was previously called Transport, will refer to accessibility addressing not only transport infrastructure, but also immaterial one, like the IT. Axis 3 will deal with environment and risk prevention; the cultural aspect is not on the foreground. An important warning from the European Commission on the need of concrete actions through a genuine trans-national cooperation. Some last observation about the AlpCity final recommendations included into the final report. I find the document is very interesting and sometimes ambitious, but I think it is a correct approach on this occasion. This is a document, not a work plan, but it has a strategic value. I hope all these strategies will be converted in concrete activities and anchored to real needs emerging from the territory. The reference to the quality of the partnership and to the idea to go on starting from the current one and trying to enlarge it is certainly positive. The current programming period has to be considered as a practice for partnerships; starting with old partners can be a competitive advantage, if the group can work well together. Of course they can be extended or integrated for specific activities. It is interesting the recall to experimenting innovative tools. Innovation is another key-word coming directly from the Commission and so these innovative tools should be translated into a support for policy-making. A last comment



regards the effort to strengthen and develop relationships and exchanges among small and medium-sized towns, trying to create synergies with urban environments able to produce and supply specific services in order to provide the smallest towns with them in special and peculiar forms. Finally I find the idea of a Committee of the Regions interesting for the political involvement, but I hope it is not conceived as a duplication of existing bodies. So you have to analyse in detail all the function of this proposed body. I wish you a good prosecution and we will keep in touch to define better this project during the next months. I hope you will go on updating your website also after the end of the project.



AlpCity Best Practices Framework: achieved results and future scenarios

**Carlo
Socco**

I would like to recall the speech on the small towns. I do not want to add any definition to the interesting Mrs. Fourny Kober's speech; I won't use a scientific paradigm according to the economic geography. I would like to give you an image in order to generate a speech on the innovative processes of the networks of small towns. The urban settlement is now a continuum; we live into an urban galaxy, which has a very complex form. The Po Valley is now a diffused megalopolis focusing around important hearts: Milan, Turin, Veneto region, etc. It is a never-ending axis along the Alps with some fringes into the valleys. Borders cannot be traced with lines, but through gradients of passages in the space. In Veneto Region this phenomenon is more extreme than in Piedmont Region. This image recalls me some science fiction novels of Asimov's. There are very peripheral areas from a physical point of view (they are difficult to be reached) and distance is still an obstacle for socio-economic reasons. They are isolated and tend to be marginalised for the centre of the galaxy, where socio-economic and spatial interactions are very intense. The traditional economic and demographic indicators (dynamics of employed people, job places, demographic rate, etc.) allow to identify these situations as more and more fragile and isolated environments. They are disappearing. According to these indicators they are far and far from the metropolitan world, which are the place of competition in the cities global

system. These places generate innovation. For this reason I am interested in the small towns: is it possible for them to innovate or their destiny is to be isolated from the big agglomerations? I think those towns are going to be more and more marginalised. We know that the alpine space needs human settlements and knowledge to be preserved. Of course it is not possible to go back to the agro-pastoral traditional economy, which is dead. So mountain needs another kind of society, an innovative one. The challenge is in terms of innovation, but differently from what happens in the metropolis. Here we have a specific environment with specific problems. We can speak about the project of a new urban identity, a new society, a new economy and a new culture to be generated. So innovation is the challenge: there is the chance to positively solve this problem. A new organisation is necessary to allow the small towns to trigger an innovative process. First of all it is necessary to stop isolation; the organisation is based on two pillars: the first one is the network to become a critical mass and to exploit scale economies. Through the ICT it is possible to overcome the friction of distances. It is important to favour the cooperation among them, to intensify the cultural interactions and exchanges. These towns have similar problems but different histories and economies with big differences. Mutual contamination, mixtures are always rich of growth and innovation. Networking to solve common problems and to set up a common strategy, which is flexible and changing. This strategy should be conceived as a system of best practices. A best practice is by definition means of innovation, which allows a certain kind of problem to be solved in the most effective and efficient way. Innovation is not only ICT or nanotechnologies; it is a way to solve a problem. What is the



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network function? It has to find the best practices, which originate in a specific place. Then it has to transfer the lessons learned from these best practices. They must be transferred into the system as more rapidly and effectively as possible. It is important to understand how innovation spreads and how we can introduce innovation within public authorities, the subject involved into this innovation process. The topic of best practices often is limited to the first step: finding best practices and setting up a database. We made an AlpCity database on best practices as well, but we said it should be only the first stage, but the innovation policy is essentially a transfer policy, but not a transfer of the best practice itself: the transfer of the lesson learned from that best practice. Without transfer there is no innovation. The transfer process is quite complex: we cannot think to apply a practice in another context, because there are different institutions, administrative rules, financial frameworks, government tools, procedures, etc. In other words policies are different among countries and they have to be influenced from the transfer. For this transfer the network is not sufficient; it must be a learning organisation with a learning centre with the necessary expertise to implement the transfer. Training is important; the lessons learned are a sort of training. So the learning centre qualifies the network and gives it the added value in order to understand what must be changed in the policies. A second pillar is represented by Regions. The network can't be formed by small municipalities: the regional intervention is essential, because it is a complex project requesting scale economies. For this reason we decided to create the AlpCityRUO. The project exists: AlpCity supplied the added value. So let's try and set up a network with these characteristics. For the alpine space some strategies of

development and urban sustainability should be put in place. I think this network can give an important contribution to the European strategy of the sustainable cities. I remember that the European campaign for the sustainable cities was born in '94 and then abandoned. All of us live in a city, in an urban context and with an urban culture. The challenge involves the cities. In the European documents on urban strategies only medium and big cities are taken into consideration. A project like this could give a contribution to the European governance in the urban sustainability policies about the role of the marginalised settlements. The idea to be connected to UN Habitat with its project of a global system of urban observatories comes as a consequence; even if UN Habitat is more oriented towards developing countries, we have to think that the cooperation with developing countries can be strategic. This project could also be a way to introduce innovation in the public authorities. Looking at the innovation policy of the European Union it is clear that innovation should be pervasive in all the policies. I would like more "*best value*" procedures, like in Great Britain in order to introduce competition, change and innovation within public authorities.



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AlpCity Project: an overall evaluation and lessons learned

**Loredana
Alfaré**

I would like to talk about the most important aspects of the project and the kind of approach, its results and the lessons learned. The role of the Scientific Steering Committee consisted mostly in finding the red line among the different case studies, supporting partners during their implementation, evaluating the most important results. The case studies concern different themes, have been developed by different countries, different administrative and territorial levels with various languages, laws and customs. In order to avoid a range of individual not interrelated case studies, the Scientific Steering Committee established methodology as the common element consisting in the participative process, the network and the transferability of the model. Another important aspect of this project is the level of cooperation both within the case studies and outside. There is an example represented by the case studies on the recovery of the architectural heritage in mountain areas. There two case studies of Piedmont Region, one of Friuli Venezia Giulia Region and one belonging to Veneto Region. They cooperated with an Interreg III C project, which is a regional framework initiative and particularly with two sub-projects on the same topic. Moreover Veneto Region cooperated also with Imont (the Italian National Institute for Mountains) for a similar project. Another example of cooperation comes from Friuli Venezia Giulia Region with its case study on environmental

certification, which collaborated with this Interreg III C project, and specifically with the subproject AEDS and another programme CADSES, subproject WAREMA. Moreover we have cooperation between Grainau and another alpine space project called Dynalp in order to develop a public-private partnership. AlpCity had a good performance for what regards exchange of experiences with other partners, projects and programmes. The project process is quite complex: from the study to the implementation together with the development of the cooperation structures. In the end the project team is substituted by some work groups, supported by public-private partnerships or by the stakeholders. This happens to allow investment and a deep impact on the territory. Within AlpCity we stopped at feasibility studies for budget reasons. The next step in case of prosecution will consist in an executive project followed by a marketing plan. For what concerns results and follow up, we know that the possible prosecution of the project converges toward an Observatory on Best Practices, we heard before about. Friuli Venezia Giulia Region has already started working on WAREMA. Lombardy Region promotes a Measure of Objective 2; it refers to support and regeneration of commercial services. Grainau is engaged with DynAlp II about tourism. For what regards the transfer of knowledge we have the collected best practices, the case studies as models, the methodology, the technical assistance, the guidelines and the specific recommendations for the small alpine towns. And, obviously, cooperation within and outside the project. Looking at the individual partners we can see that Franche-Comté Region and Rhône-Alpes Region have a support mechanism between Regions and municipalities. Niederösterreich is a model for the participative process.



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Lombardy Region proposes a model of cooperation among traders; Grainau the integration among sectors. Friuli, Veneto and Piedmont applied different tools to improve the management and prepare some regulations. We have also different lessons learned. It is better to have an external expert as moderator to reduce conflicts. Also the involvement of local actors and the implementation of a participative process can give positive results if supported by a method. Moreover local authorities need a technical support, because they have a low planning capacity. The follow up phase is very important; giving projects a prosecution and optimising the time of collecting data, because the limited time available. Dialogue and cooperation with stakeholders improve the project performance. The best solution consists in a mixture of top-down and bottom-up approach especially for technical projects. The set up of networks takes a lot of time and it is a long-term project. The time limitations should be taken more into account when a project is written. More training and information for what regards best practices to be transferred; maybe it is necessary to integrate the initiatives with regional and local funds. Communication and information, both internal and external, is a very important asset for a global project. Also a good leadership is essential: Mrs. Cavallo Perin is rare example of engaged public officer speaking two foreign languages and following the whole project life. Also the team is an important factor of success for the project. In order to overcome obstacles, different languages, rules, is indispensable to introduce innovative tools. Best practices transformed from a marginal activities to the pivotal element of the project.

Manfred Perlik

My speech is almost more abstract, a little bit more strategic and complementary to what other speakers said. AlpCity in the light of European and local processes, that means that Europe claims its sustainable and regional development and polycentricity. The starting point has been the sustainable development at regional level and polycentrism at the beginning of this programme in '99. The recent developments go towards another direction; all we can observe is that peripheral areas are weaker, while metropolis are stronger. In this situation the regions with a scarce population are disadvantaged, because there are less chances of interaction. Networking is more difficult and the human capital is very complicated to be preserved. For what concerns Switzerland there is the empirical evidence of a more intense growth in the rural areas in comparison with the metropolitan ones; afterwards the trend inverted. Debate is less focused on decentralisation, but on the strengthening of metropolitan zones. If we consider the six scenarios of the Alpine Perspective Study by Thomas Bausch and Amata Vagner, there are always two kinds of interpretation for what concerns the level of polycentrism and its effectiveness. There are also different concepts at European level: if the local development directives move towards the opposite direction it is necessary to develop new strategies for development to give small and medium-sized structures can have their own power and preserve their traditional variety. This search is the most important element in the alpine Space agenda together with the individual regions' interests. For what concerns the Alps this objective is tridimensional: there are peripheral structures, which need chances to develop. The small and medium-sized towns should assume a role as development poles; so the marginal municipalities of the Alps



should strengthen the relationships with extra-alpine agglomerations. The AlpCity Project has been particularly characterised by participation and best practices, because all the case studies considered this aspect; the local population has been directly involved. The second objective of local development has also been fulfilled. All the case studies promoted purposes in line with their regional priorities; all of them got some improvements. The urban development is an objective achieved above all in Italy, where there is a certain traditional compactness of villages. The strategic element is represented by the role of small and medium-sized towns as links between the big competitive cities and the big regions. Because of the heterogeneity of the case studies, this task has not been fulfilled: this should be taken into consideration in the next projects. From a scientific point of view we have to say that AlpCity was not expected to provide scientific results like all the Interreg III B projects. In any case they offer a very valuable contribution, because they analyse all the different cultures, mentalities and languages. We observed also that the administrative focus can seem excessive. An important question regards, in my opinion the communication difficulties, because of the choice of the language. The Swiss example is very useful: we should learn the languages of our neighbours. The most important documents are the Lisbon and Gotenborgh Agendas: competitiveness and employment are the main objectives. But there is still an ongoing task: it necessary to preserve regional interests in spite of polycentrism .

AlpCity experience and new cross-border cooperation

**Andrea
Ezio
Canepa**

I would like not to be considered as an official speaker, because I did not take an active part into the project. Mrs. Cavallo Perin invited me just outline the future of cross-border cooperation particularly between Italy and France. The relationships between Italy and Switzerland are still not so advanced. I have been taking care of the European Leader Initiative and of the rural integrated development for years. I read all the documents about the project and I listened to the debate and the previous speeches. I would like to speak about two programmes: a rural development one (because Leader is not an European Union Initiative any more) and the cross-border territorial cooperation. I hope to be useful to AlpCity with some reflections I can express. I followed particularly the 21 AlpCity case studies and I would like to point out also another set of case studies of Piedmont Region dealing with similar topics and developed within the Leader cross-sectoral integrated planning. I am persuaded that we have to believe in our projects in order to work effectively on some themes. In my opinion innovation in all the fields represents the only chance to manage territories. If we cannot produce innovation and give modern answers to dormant problems, we cannot progress. On average our territories develop local development initiatives on areas with about 40,000 inhabitants. So we number 10 local action groups in Piedmont with 400,000 inhabitants involved; it deals with mountain and hill areas with scarce population density (less than 100 inhabitants for km² and on average 50-60 inhabitants for km²). In all these small towns (with less than 5,000 inhabitants) many



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projects have been designed and AlpCity could take them into consideration together to examples from abroad in order to fill in the mosaic of best practices. We have many case studies tested according to the Leader method; following what Prof. Socco said we should try to influence policy-making and not only to find the right method. Piedmont Region tries to increase the value of its own best practices, but we have also an European Union Leader Observatory aiming at disseminating best practices, which is a very complex activity if performed on a large-scale. We should understand that the AlpCity Best Practices Laboratory together with Leader really constitutes an incredible heritage, which acknowledges the efforts of the small mountain towns, communities and non-institutional actors. In this period we are trying to improve the new axis of the Rural Development Programme implementing the Leader methodology. We mean to address first of all territories, which already implemented a Leader experience, just to capitalize previous results and to re-launch their contents. From piloting, innovative, rural development initiatives we will go towards more concrete experiences. There are already many studies and guidelines for the recovery of the rural heritage, together with initiatives for environmental certification and hamlets renewal. The benefiting from Leader territory will be limited according to the European instructions; we realized that these territories should have real links to big cities and other pivotal territories while implementing their policies. In fact they are able to exploit all the resources stimulating local endogenous development; they generate innovation, but tend to implode on themselves. We work to the opening of these territories to external skills and expertise. In my mind I hoped setting up a local action group delocalized for topics,

but this path won't be followed, because it is not foreseen in the European Union Regulations. AlpCity can play a very important role, because building up a network is not an easy task, because a real partnership can survive only if there is a reciprocal advantage and exchange. I am sorry that Mr. Bontempi is not here as key-note speaker: he has worked on the "Turin as city of the Alps" idea for a long time; today he is working to another important initiative named "Alps 365", which is meant to stimulate a dialogue between rural and mountain territories. Moving from the endogenous local development towards an enlarged territorial scale, more similar to the AlpCity one. This space is bigger and characterized by networks: I would like to speak about the cross-border cooperation. We work with France (Paca and Rhône-Alpes), Liguria Region and Aosta Valley Autonomous Region. We have defined some key points, which mark a certain discontinuity with the past; we tried to introduce effective improvements producing results. In fact in small territories there is a direct contact with local authorities and groups of interest, which wait for concrete answers. So we couple innovation with concreteness. We had a programme with public calls on different topics: tourism, environment, culture and so on. These measures, now concluded, were like boxes full of projects, but they were not integrated even regarding the same area (departments and provinces). This mechanism didn't generate any consequence, support and synergies. For this reason we thought to divide the project apart from the Axis (competitiveness, territory and life quality). In the future we will accept three typologies of projects within ALCOTRA (if this name will be preserved). We would like to drive the strategies with projects defined as structuring, inscribed directly into the programme. We



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received five key-words from the elected policy-makers, which are: poles of competence and research networks to transfer technologies and innovation (not only technological) to enterprises; tourism; risk prevention; transports and accessibility. Then we will have another kind of projects, which involve few beneficiaries and partners: they are specific and need a punctual planning. They are named punctual or simple projects; they can deal with sanitary and social services. Finally there is another kind of projects, which preserve and capitalize the Leader results; all these activities are not easy to be led, because it is necessary combine the bottom-up approach and the top-down support through technical assistance. In this sense the integrated planning should be implemented on an area, neglecting borders between countries. Projects are proposed by certain partners and are linked among them; they should be more lasting and strengthen cooperation among territories. I am speaking about Switzerland, Rhône-Alpes and Paca. I think this third project typology is very interesting, because the AlpCity experience can be very useful in this sense, in integrating different projects with the same objective in order to pursue similar strategies. Relationships among project promoters are fundamental and have to be developed. After listening the previous speeches and reading the AlpCity final recommendations I can perceive the AlpCity partnership's will to reach more ambitious results. This is very positive, because in most cases projects conclude when the money flow ends. On the contrary projects have to foresee the prosecution of their works, even after the deadline. This means that it is necessary to work at other levels, along a new way. Apart from its ambitions, I would like that AlpCity could preserve its partnership by taking care also of the best



practices spin-offs, of their transfer and dissemination. AlpCity could play the role of linkage between its trans-national dimension and the smaller-scaled projects. In my opinion AlpCity should have two souls: a territorial one, still more concrete and made up of these relationships useful also to other programmes. The other one deals with innovation and its development, which can lead to a new balance of opportunities among the small towns. I conclude communicating the greetings of Mrs. Sibille, Regional Councillor for Mountains. I will keep in touch with Mrs. Cavallo Perin just to share the progress of our work and I really hope in a future collaboration.



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AlpCity final recommendations

**Maria
Cavallo
Perin**

I conceived AlpCity outside my institutional duties, fruit of a great passion for mountains. Now I have the task to recall you the AlpCity final recommendations, we wish to present as group of

partners, who have worked together to a very difficult project for two years and half. I would like to thank three persons apart from the efficient AlpCity team. First of all I would like to recall Mr. Rinaldo Bontempi, who sent me the following message:

'As I told you I cannot take part into the AlpCity final conference in spite of my previous promises. Unfortunately my age and all the things I have to do prevent me to fulfil all I promise. I wished to participate in the discussion on a project, you and your staff developed with passion. In my opinion it represents an interesting multi-country project of local development.

From my European and international observatory I remark a growing interest in local governance as innovative contribution to the problems of economic development and democratic participation. It is quite meaningful that a giant organisation like UNO is following the local development path also in international cooperation through its agencies. Moreover I am sorry that I am not there in Pracatinat, which represents for me with some nostalgic feelings a record of the effort performed in the second half of the 70s to transform the old hospital into a facility for social and cultural relationships.

I wish to excuse me with all the conference participants. I confirm my support to the future prosecution of the project and to the dissemination of its results.

Best regards

Rinaldo Bontempi'

He is the first person I want to thank for his contributions to regional officers. He has worked in the Regional Council for a long period and at the Parliament. He introduced me to Urban and the integrated planning, when in '94 with the planning of GESCAL funds devoted to social housing Piedmont Region took part in the Urban Programme.

The second person I would like to thank is Mrs. Anna Prat. She helped me starting this project and designing it. After she was substituted, because energies and competences for the project management were not available. She has been invited, but she can't be here and wish you her best regards.

The third person I really thank is Mr. Mario Vella from the Ministry of the Economic Development and he came to work with me for the funds planning of underdeveloped areas. There is a close relationship between our institutional work and the work developed within AlpCity: the capacity to understand the others' position in order to cooperate and set up a shared planning process.

In my opinion he is an example of the way vertical and inter-institutional state-regions cooperation can work well and I thank him to be here with us. I hope he will speak later, because his opinion is always stimulating for us.

Now I will summarise the final recommendations: first of all we have to strengthen our partnership, fruit of will and enthusiasm to work together. All the partners contributed to the project success. As Mr. Suber said before, we should work at



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strategic level for long-term objectives: this is the reason why the project will be prosecuted.

We aim at a stable partnership in order to achieve the joint and shared policy-making for the alpine towns. To reach this purpose we need an organisation. The main problem is the definition of innovative tools for territorial government. The simple exchange of experiences is not sufficient, as Prof. Socco said: we have to find the method of transferring the lessons learned. The partnership is the fundamental tool to choose new policies, regions will be able to share through a common debate. But we need also applications of experimental policies and so a matching of these experimental applications. We believe in the need to enhance new territorial vocations to emerge. In this sense territories and regions are active. As regions we have to act in these places, where the risk of regress and social exclusion is bigger; we should help them finding new paths. This can be done through connections among regions, among towns and among small and medium-sized towns. All these proposals aim at preserving the AlpCity partnership and at creating a Laboratory in Piedmont Region, which could be co-financed by other regions in a limited quota. It should represent a shared choice and it should favour innovation growth in these territories, in the creation of enterprises, in the territorial management and, as Prof. Socco said, within public authorities. This Laboratory should develop all the disciplines linked to development, to the economic improvement and that of the alpine environment. Mr. Enrico Camanni always recalls the necessity to develop the conditions to attract new generations in those areas, where only the current resident population is not sufficient. We need the capacity to attract new energies, new resources by creating job opportunities in

the small alpine towns and favouring the migration of people, who can determine a change. This morning Mr. Corvo spoke about the development of entrepreneurship. The same statement is supported by Mr. Camanni: inducing entrepreneurial spirit through public-private collaboration. The role of regions is essential in this sense to develop and strengthen relationships and exchanges among towns.

I would like to recall an impressive image proposed by Mrs. Fourny Kober about the micropolisation as opposed to metropolisation. The development of innovation is enhanced through the exchange between the rural towns and the big competitive ones.

At the same time we verified the importance that regional policies can favour the flourishing of new urban functions in the small alpine towns. The example of Piedmont Region with the international mountain school of the Maritime Alps should be concretely put in place through the strong cooperation between two countries. The local development issue, in fact, can be solved only with the national level involvement.

Improving competences of local communities in the draft of development strategies of urban planning, in programming, in projecting public works and in the service management. Exchanges among public officers should also be encouraged towards small alpine towns.

I have also the idea to strengthen an alpine common market for public works and services, with its specificities like all the eco-compatible techniques, or a common price system for eco-building materials. These competences can be produced in the Alps.

In conclusion we want to set up a new trans-national partnership starting from the existing one; moreover we have the intention to establish a Committee of Regions. As Mr.



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Curzolo correctly observed, we have to find a new form, which allows existing and new partners to match and discuss about policies in the small alpine towns. Piedmont Region is available to host this Laboratory in its facilities and supports this ambitious project: to take care of spatial planning with a wide vision and of programming common and shared policies. The activity will exploit the experience and knowledge collected also through the Urban Programme. We will be happy to share our experience with the whole territory of each region, which is interested to use it for the future European funds programming, in order to work on strategies towards innovation.

I am persuaded, that the Regional Laboratory on the small alpine towns is the tool to create the right conditions for the development policies shared by European Regions.

Open discussion

Daniela Sena

I would like to start this open discussion with Mrs. Patrizia Rossi, Director of the Natural Park of the Maritime Alps, who has been directly involved into the AlpCity Project through the coordination and the implementation of one of the most innovative case studies promoted by Piedmont Region.

Patrizia Rossi

First of all I would like to thank Piedmont Region for giving us the chance to be part of the AlpCity Project and, even if later, to carry out an idea proposed to Mrs. Cavallo Perin and Ms. Sena during the project design phase. Of course, the involvement gave us the opportunity to perfect our initial idea. Thanks to the selection as case study, our proposal has been framed around the creation of an international mountain school by a properly established work group. The starting point is that school represents the most important element in order to preserve mountain settlements and to ensure a minimum life quality to resident people. In fact there are families and couples, who decide to move to mountain areas with the purpose to start an economic, and sometimes innovative, activity. The first troubles begin with babies and particularly when they have to go to school. Sometimes schools are far, other times they cannot offer certain basic services. There is also a high teachers turnover, because mountain schools can bid teachers a high score, but they are undesired. For this reason a continuous teaching cannot be guaranteed. Our idea consisted in providing this school with innovative contents. We



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aimed at creating a link between the school and our park, through the study of environment and of the jobs regarding mountains; through the development of a local territorial identity. At the same time we didn't want to be connected only to the past: in this sense we have included also the study of modern languages and IT. When we started working, we realized that there were similar models in the Alps, also in Italy, but not far from our French border we have had the chance to analyse a couple of cases, where our dream was already reality. We worked a lot also with some local groups of interest, with families, with local authorities, in order to collect all the needs and the problems to be solved. At the moment we have developed a feasibility study and we are ready for the next step, that is the infrastructure building and the set up of the school. We are very confident for what concerns the prosecution of the AlpCity Project and we hope to set up fruitful synergies with Piedmont Region, Ministers, etc. just to make our project concrete. We signed also a memorandum of cooperation with the regional school authorities and another one with the corresponding French authorities, in order to create a network of mountain schools working in the same direction. So I conclude with the most sincere hope of giving birth to this international mountain school.

Daniela Sena

I invite all the participants to take part into this discussion, particularly all the partners, the Scientific Steering Committee experts, all the people involved into the case studies, the representatives of local authorities and key institutions for local sustainable development in the Alps. I request them to give us some inputs for our future in line with what was said during this day.

Also people coming for the first time are called to express their comments and their questions.

**Francesco
Pastorelli**

My name is Francesco Pastorelli, I am Director of CIPRA Italy, which is the international Committee for the Alps protection, a no-governmental organization dealing mostly with environmental issues and with everything concerning the Convention for the Alps protection. I would like to confirm the support of CIPRA Italy to the AlpCity Project in order to carry on a debate with the work group of Piedmont Region led by Mrs. Cavallo Perin and Ms. Sena. I try and develop some observations, I suppose useful for the future of AlpCity. CIPRA has been working with networks for a long time; we pay attention to the collection and implementation of the so-called Best Practices, main characters of this event. I like recalling, for example, the network of alpine municipalities, Vicepresident Zambon will speak later about, which was born 10 years ago thanks to an input coming from CIPRA. I do not know the territory (municipalities, population, enterprises, association, etc.) involvement in detail. I presume that they could be more and more involved through the Laboratory, Mrs. Cavallo Perin outlined earlier; even if this could produce a loss of efficiency and competitiveness in the projects. In any case, I am persuaded this risk earns to be met. As regards best practices, I would like to recall another project, that is "Future in the Alps" led by CIPRA. At present it is in the implementation step and the alpine municipalities are the main player of this phase. Moreover, I would add something without being critical: during this event we are talking about the Alpine Space; for this reason we cannot forget the Alpine



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Convention and its protocols, even bearing in mind its limits. It should be considered as a guideline for all the Alpine Space projects. For example a target for the future AlpCity may consist in the implementation of the Protocol on Spatial Planning by a group of small alpine towns. In my opinion, it could be an excellent result. A final recommendation: I was thinking about the present role of the small alpine towns; in the past they were a reference point for rural areas, while today they are often satellite of big towns. In this sense they could lose their alpine and rural character and suffer from exported metropolization forms. Paradoxically the new core for rural and mountain areas is represented by plain towns, instead of alpine ones. For what concerns our region, I think that a city like Turin, which is not an alpine town, is more important for the Piedmontese mountain territory than other towns like Susa, Pinerolo and Saluzzo. We have also examples of big towns exported to mountains: like Sésriere, a city at the height of 2000 metres. I would like to re-launch an invitation to recover the rural character of the alpine territory. I do not mean to express a judgement about the positive or negative aspect of losing the rural character; but I think this transformation in the role of the alpine towns should be deeply analysed.

Daniela Sena

I thank Francesco Pastorelli also for having mentioned the Alpine Convention. During the implementation of the AlpCity Project we referred to that Convention; also the AlpCity Final Report reveals that AlpCity paid attention to it and tried to find occasions and opportunities of true and effective collaboration. To tell the truth it was not easy from a pragmatic point of view. We are sorry that the invited

representatives of the Alpine Convention have not taken part in this meeting, but I am persuaded that there will be future occasions of cooperation.

Antonio Zambon

My name is Antonio Zambon, I am Mayor of the Municipality of Budoia in Friuli Venezia Giulia Autonomous Region and I am also vice-president of the "Alliance in the Alps" Association, which now groups about 230 alpine municipalities from France to Slovenia. Each country has its own representative; I represent Italy and play the role of vice-president. The next year is our tenth birthday and we are very satisfied, because we know that small towns find many difficulties in finding occasions of knowledge and experience exchange. We have accepted Cipra's proposal to form a network in order to try and understand better. At the beginning the experience has been very interesting and challenging: little by little we have also created and promoted a project, Dynalp, with 53 alpine municipalities (10 belonging to Italy). From a bureaucratic point of view it revealed to be a very hard experience, especially for the municipalities. This challenge contributed to our growth: we have introduced some news into the community, news regarding the project and the network. I am very happy also because in the AlpCity partnership you can name two members of our alliance: the municipalities of Grainau and Tschlin. This means that networks can be enlarged. Moreover I think that the knowledge exchange is a very important element. Mountains have experimented depopulation, but we can say that a great energy moved abroad from mountains, in order to create innovation and entrepreneurship. Mountain has always been promoter of new initiatives, which contribute to the plain cities growth. In



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my opinion this is a positive aspect: now we have to create a reversal process by attracting people towards mountains. Otherwise every project cannot work without people, youth, families. They do not come to mountains if they cannot enjoy a life standard similar to cities one. For us this is a challenge, which can be met through the Alpine Convention. In a very little a Protocol will be approved; it is about "population and culture in the Alps", topics analysed also in the AlpCity Project. The Alpine Convention is a great spur to work. We shouldn't think according to a mentality typical of cities based on competitiveness and economic efficiency. We should go on according to a different speed. Nature has a different speed; this is the reason we have to meet environmental disasters more and more often. We have enough resources in mountains, but we waste them to repair damages. We should prevent these risks and the revitalization and networking of small towns can be a useful tool. "Alliance in the Alps" has been recognized by the Alpine Convention: it is a member observator of the Convention protocols. We were convoked in Central Asia during the international year of the mountains. In Central Asia a network of municipalities was created according to our experience: the network name is Agoca and includes municipalities of Tagikistan, Kazakhstan and Kirghizistan. We were asked to export our model also in the Caucasian area. Mountains need to be connected and led to recover their identity and their territorial peculiarities. For what concerns the language problem, I believe it is important for us to speak four languages. We can accept English as work language, but speaking the four alpine language could help being nearer to the population. In this way people can follow projects. I know it is difficult and expensive, but the youth can learn different languages more

easily. The English language doesn't allow us to translate toponyms and other specific terms we use during our normal communications. We should understand that language can be a strength also in the Alps.

**Mario
Vella**

My name is Mario Vella and I am an officer of the Ministry of the Economic Development. First of all I would like to thank what has been said about myself and about the experience, I am carrying on with Piedmont Region. Belonging to the Ministry of the Economic Development my office takes care particularly of the development projects in all the alpine regions, from Friuli Venezia Giulia Autonomous Region, to the two autonomous Provinces of Trento and Bozen, Lombardy Region, Veneto Region, Piedmont Region and Aosta Valley Autonomous Region. For this reason this meeting is very important to me, because it is the occasion to speak about economic development in alpine and mountain areas. I would like to outline that the Italian Government has its own funds to promote economic development apart from the ones made available through the European Union Programmes. In fact there are particular balance sheet items to promote agreements between the national authorities and the regional ones, particularly for infrastructure set up. At present we have already signed 120 agreements with a value of about 18 mld € with the seven alpine Regions. I come from the plain, a completely different world: for this reason I cannot express any judgement on the success of this initiative. I can give some inputs, coming from my experience and after the statements heard today. First of all I would like to say something about the bottom-up approach to development. As economist I agree with Mr. Trauner: it is



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fundamental that projects come out from the bottom. A great attention to project appropriation should be paid in order to trigger effective local development. Then I would like to consider Mr. Croccolo's observation: when the central authorities look at these projects, they see just a multitude of projects difficult to be aggregated according to a rationale. Finding a rationale is not always a need, but if we pose great objectives, we are also forced to impose some rules and to channel energies. This could be a challenge for the next call: during the first experience AlpCity gained acceptance, because it raised new prospects, but for the new programming period expectations are higher. More concrete results are requested and perhaps you will be able to manage projects in a better way more coherent with the general framework. This can be a good opportunity to reach more tangible objectives according to the indications of politicians and resident population. A second aspect I would like to underline regards cooperation. As Mr. Corvo from Lombardy Region said, it is very difficult for municipalities to work together. This is the Italian experience; is it different in the other alpine countries? Also Regions find difficult to cooperate; but there is an added value in the cooperation among different local authorities, because you have many small municipalities, which are hardly able to cover the knowledge and skills gap with the big urban centres. For this reason they need to be connected through a network, otherwise only municipalities with clever mayors will be able to make progress. If municipalities work together it is easier to set up big projects. A small town is not able to set up a big project by itself, because it has not enough resources, the political consensus and the strength. According to our experience of national agreements, I can say that putting the

central authorities, the regional authorities and an important body dealing with communications or environment together can make the difference. It is possible to unify indented projects. Of course inter-institutional cooperation is not a simple issue, but it can be the sense of this initiative. The direction is creating concrete project in order to be in line with expectations and you will be certainly able in so doing for the next programming period.

**Enrico
Camanni**

My name is Enrico Camanni, Director of *L'Alpe*, a review on alpine culture. I would like to develop some personal considerations. I deal with cultural themes, because I am not an economist or a policy-maker. I am simply an observator and maybe I can freely speak, even if I lack some tools. The present event has revealed to be very interesting, because different points of view have been compared, even remaining always in line with the conference purposes. The results of this project appear to be beyond criticism, both from a technical standpoint and from a pragmatic one. The concrete aspect of the project consists in finding best practices or solutions still in a theoretical framework: this object has been fully performed. Now it is necessary more disenchantment and strength in order to go to the next step. I was impressed by Prof. Socco's statement, maybe because he very honestly said, what many mountain experts think and nobody is enough brave to tell. For example he said something I have been thinking for years, but that I can admit with some troubles: the alpine towns belong to the same world of the plain; they are part of this urban galaxy, which extends like a sea in gulfs and reaches also very far places completely different from the big vibrant centres. According



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to me this is a fundamental point of view for a qualitative leap. These small municipalities often consist in few families retreated into their prejudices, who argue among them. This portrait seems to be the same one in Friuli Venezia Giulia Region, but also in Austria and Switzerland, where everything looks neat and beautiful: dynamics are similar, even if history and traditions are different. This environment can be seen according to two different ways: on one hand like rests of a disappeared past to be regretted (because everywhere people dream to live like Turin or Milan citizens, unless they have undertaken a backward process, understanding that it is wrong); on the other hand like outposts of modernity. It is not wise to think that ancient traditions and the agricultural economy could be re-launched through old methods. On the contrary we should conceive them with new tools, which request above all a renewed thought. In my opinion this is the most correct starting point: afterwards caution is necessary, because networking and best practices transfer are not easy to be carried out. However it is true, what Mrs. Fourny Kober said: at present our mountains, the Alps and our small towns are basins preserving real records of folk wisdom. We can perceive those signs and memories still alive among people. As Mrs. Fourny Kober said these rural characteristics can be transformed into resources. This is true: in fact we are quite schizophrenic. At the same time we love a comfortable and modern like, but we gasp the memory of this rural past, apart from the uncontaminated nature (which doesn't exist even in the Alps) and the most common romantic calls. For this reason there is a flourishing revival of old professions just for tourist purposes: sometimes mountain people disguise themselves as their forefathers, because they have to satisfy tourists' expectations. So I agree that all these features can

be transformed into resources, but through a complex processing. For mountain people this environment can be perceived as a prison; while city people gasp these authentic experiences as natural and tradition-seeking realities. Once again the urban scale of values is prevailing. According to me we should develop an important mediation activity (like Mrs. Rossi does within the Park) between the mountain vision (nor more isolationist or worse) and the urban one, which are still very far from each other. I think the Laboratory could play this important role of mediation; I hope it will be created and succeed with a role of translating different communication codes. This could be a great result from our urban point of view, because our civilization is not perfect, even if imposed to the whole world. The sustainability problem is ours and it is not shared by the old mountain people. What we can do is setting up mountain cases and laboratories of a wiser and less wasteful civilization, which could get an expected life longer than the dominating one.



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Closing session

**Maria
Cavallo
Perin**

I suppose we can conclude this working day by postponing the debate to the partners' meeting, which will take place tomorrow. Today we have concluded a very difficult but fruitful period.

Tomorrow we will try and put the premises to go on with our collaboration. Inputs coming from people not directly involved into the project have been very useful; AlpCity has been followed not only by the partners, but also by many other actors. I thank all the participants and all the suggestions emerged from the statements of the representatives of Alliance in the Alps and the Ministry of Economic Development; also Enrico Camanni gave us some important inputs to go on. I would like to thank the AlpCity team: Daniela Sena, Anna Maria Caputano, Antonella Convertino e Valentina Scioneri; the Project Partners for their dedication and the Scientific Steering Committee experts for their precious considerations. All of them contributed to the great added value of this project. Prof. Socco outlined the future features of this project and I am very confident we will be able to go on working together. Just in conclusion I thank also the interpreters, an exemplary model of entrepreneurship for the Alps.

**Daniela
Sena**

Thank you again to all the participants; to Mr. Zobel and his collaborators for the hospitality here in Pracatinat; to the Project Partners; to the Scientific Steering Committee experts; to the Observatory on



Sustainable Cities; to CSI Piemonte; to the interpreters; to the technicians and drivers; to all the people charged of the AlpCity collateral activities (school exchange between Turin and Grainau; "Arte au bureau" Project); to all the colleagues from Piedmont Region and to my faithful team. I conclude by recalling a very special person, Mrs. Cavallo Perin, who created the project and supported it with a forward-looking approach. We all hope to go on with her along this challenging path.

Thank you.