Demographic Change

The term “demographic change” describes a change in the age structure of a society’s human population. This includes various aspects, such as birth rates, death rates and migration in or out of the society, which determine the nature of a demographic change. In Europe’s aging societies, demographic change is a crucial issue today and even more so in the future.

Alps and Demographic Change

It is known that the Alpine space differs greatly from its surrounding metropolitan areas. Therefore, it requires specific in-depth studies for accurate spatial planning and regional development. Separate analyses of each Alpine area are needed in various fields such as migration, cost and quality of settlement and housing, labor market, changes in regional demand for public services (i.e. transportation, healthcare, education) and changes in consumer behavior related to key economies such as tourism and agriculture.

DEMOCHANGE Alpine Space Project

The Alpine Space “DEMOCHANGE” project’s aim is to better understand the past, current and future regional and spatial impacts of demographic change specifically within the mountain regions. Therefore, the DEMOCHANGE project has been given a “Priority One” importance rating by the European Commission. DEMOCHANGE is the first and currently only project addressing the important effects and opportunities that exist as a result of demographic change in the Alpine space.

Results for Whom?

This project will bring together the expertise of planners, regional developers, decision-makers from local/regional levels and students from the fields of planning, economics and geography. In addition, it will raise awareness among the general public, politicians and regional stakeholders for the importance of demographic change in the Alpine space. It will also lead to the start-up of a transnational DEMOCHANGE exchange network. This network will in turn lead to an on-going transfer of the DEMOCHANGE results to all levels of planning in order to improve spatial planning and regional development in the future.

Where to find further information and assistance?

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Thirteen key partners from Austria, Germany, Italy, Slovenia and Switzerland have joined forces to elaborate concrete strategies in ten model regions. The regional findings will be merged to create strategies which can be generally applied across the Alpine space and disseminated effectively through the transnational DEMOCHANGE exchange network. These strategies will also be shared and put to practical use through a series of workshops and international conferences. This intensive information and knowledge transfer will allow people in the Alpine space to understand how to prepare for demographic change and to address the challenges that will arise as its result. DEMOCHANGE will also help people realize how every demographic change presents new and unique business opportunities and demonstrate how to capture them for a successful future.

**Project partners**

The DEMOCHANGE project will be led by Munich University of Applied Sciences, Faculty of Tourism. In addition, each participating model region will be linked to at least one partner from an institution of Applied Sciences for support and guidance at the implementation level. These partners listed below will together deliver a solid basic analysis of the current and future impacts of demographic change in the model regions. Furthermore, steering groups in each model region will define concrete adaptation strategies and generalize these strategies for the transnational exchange network. The merged results will ultimately be used to give recommendations to other Alpine regions in support of their efforts to adapt to demographic change.

**Austria** | Regional Government of Salzburg, Department of Spatial Planning together with the model regions: Lungau, Lower Pinzgau and the Department of Geography and Geology of the University of Salzburg

**Slovenia** | RAGOR Regional Development Agency for Upper Gorenjska together with the observer municipality Kranjska Gora and the Urban Planning Institute of Slovenia

**Germany** | District Oberallgäu / district Garmisch-Partenkirchen and Munich University of Applied Sciences

**Switzerland** | Conference Swiss Central Cantons Luzern, Uri, Schwyz, Obwalden, Zug und Nidwalden and Interface Institute of Political Studies and Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts

**Italy** | National Union of Mountain Municipalities, Communities and Authorities - Piedmont Delegation UNCEM, Aosta Valley Autonomous Region, economic and social observatory and the Free University of Bolzano