

# PADIMA

Policies Against Depopulation In Mountain Areas

## *Increasing the attractiveness of mountain areas for retired people*

This brochure presents several strategies to increase the attractiveness of mountain territories for retired people. Key actions related to **economic diversification**, **education and training** and **territorial marketing** are being exposed.



PADIMA is a project cofinanced by:



**This brochure offers general advice for creating better conditions to maintain, attract and settle retired people in the mountain areas.**

This brochure is designed to the attention of:

- **Elected people** at local, regional and national level
- **Administrative stakeholders** involved in designing public policies.

**Contents:**

<b>Are mountains attractive for retired people?</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>What needs to be done?</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>More life long learning opportunities</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Improve services for retired people</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Communicate positively your region &amp; promote volunteering</b>	<b>11</b>





## Are mountains attractive for retired people?

In 2010, 17% of the European population lived in mountain areas, which represented some 188 million inhabitants. Looking at the age of inhabitants in 7 mountain areas (see the map below), we noticed that indeed, ***the proportion of retired people in mountain areas is higher than at the regional or country level.***

Attracting retired people is therefore not necessarily an objective as such. BUT, mountain areas happen to be attractive for retiring people because of the quality of life they provide. And retired people are in some in not many cases wealthy, in demand for services.

And **they can contribute positively to the local economy!**



## What needs to be done?

Do you think your region can host more retired people? Do you see the benefits that their installation will bring for the local economy? Then you should think about :

- **taking full advantage of economic opportunities arising from a high proportion of elderly people:** development of related economic sectors (health, care and everyday services), and volunteering;
- providing a **sufficient level of public and private services** to retired people;
- **developing inter-generational links** to strengthen the mountain community and to permit to elderly generation to develop diverse activities locally. This will, on one side, allow older generations to find a diversity of activities, and, on the other side, allow younger generations to benefit from the professional and life experience of the older people.



## More life-long learning opportunities

There are some important key measures that do not only impact retired people, but also all other categories of age. We have developed them with other occasions (see the brochures designed for young and working age people) but we will recall the most important ones, once more:

- **Diversify the offer of training to allow people to improve their skills**
- **Use the Information and Communication technologies (ICTs) to provide access to specific courses via distance learning**

Then **the volunteering**, in education sector, and not only, should also be particularly taken care of.



# How to do it in practice?

## *Offer more specialisations & trainings*

Schools, universities and training institutes in the mountain areas need to offer education in a much bigger variety of sectors, as this will permit not only to young people to follow their studies on-site, but also to retired people, who might get interested to follow certain specific trainings, once they have the time.

*The Hedmark County, Norway, developed several branches of higher education in the following fields: engineering, nature and cultural tourism, law, finance and creative use of the ICT in kinder gardens.*

*Location: the Small municipalities of the Mountain Region in Hedmark and Sør-Trøndelag Counties (Fjellregionen) : Tynset, Røros and Trøndelag (PADIMA GP 38 WP1).*

## *Use the Information and Communication technologies (ICTs) to provide access*

*In Teruel, Spain, the province has developed a series of classes of continued education for adults from rural and mountainous areas (PADIMA, GP 6, WP1). Classes can even been held on-site in schools, or delivered through internet. The structure consists in 11 centers, that cover 46 municipalities and 2 regions. The classes delivered cover the computer literacy, health sector, culture, natural heritage, Spanish classes for foreigners, etc and encounter an important success (more than 7000 students).*

## *Promote volunteering in the education and training sector*

Retired people have a great experience of life. They are knowledgeable and skilled in many fields. They have energy, spare time and some are interested in remaining active, in contact with younger generations. As a result, very often, they get involved in cultural activities, non-governmental associations and leisure clubs.

*Furthermore, we imagine retired people's volunteering can have a positive impact on education of young people. Several things can be envisaged: migrants from abroad could give language classes in their mother tongue language, successful retired specialists can intervene in technical classes bringing specific insights and highlights on things and attitudes that matter in the professional context. They can give hints on how to find a good job and how to keep it, etc. We see here a lot of interesting opportunities to be exploited in a context of "transfer of experiences between different generations".*

*We recommend approaching this in a strategic way, with a good communication of the initial intentions, attention to the selection of volunteers; careful programming of the content of exchanges thanks to the involvement of responsible teachers, etc.*



**Improve services  
for retired people**

### **Develop a high quality health and care service sector in mountain areas**

“Silver economy” driven by retired people is synonymous with opportunities of development in the service sector. Services can be provided by private companies and not only by the public sector, as one may think. Care services can be approached from two angles. Firstly, local people must be trained to provide good quality health and care services. Secondly, an important demand for care services must be seen as an opportunity to develop specific know-how and regional excellence in that sector. A dynamic approach to these issues therefore requires both training and innovation.



## *Qualify mountain people for care services*



In the context of an ageing population, regions need more people qualified in the field of care services. They also must use new health-care technology. With a higher number of retired people, mountain areas have a higher challenge to fulfil.

This also represents opportunities for qualified employment!

*In region Dalarna, through the initiative Health and Social Care College (GP27 WP1), private employers, training providers and public authorities have decided to face the challenge of providing high quality services for retired people by training people locally.*

*The accent is put on practical issues: quality of the care service, attention for patients and availability of the staff.*

*The initiative aims at developing and adapting the skills development of existing staff but also at training younger generations so that they can excel in care service. Training is provided both directly in the hospitals and on-line.*

## *Develop an innovative care service sector*

The experience achieved in PADIMA study areas shows an interesting trend of migration of “young retired people” to the mountain areas where they seek to enjoy a good quality of life, proximity to nature and leisure activities while they are in good health.

However, in some areas, “older-retired” people tend to leave mountain areas for cities – where they can get specialized medical follow-up and care services for days when they get weaker. To permit mountain residents to be able to continue living in their home regions, care sector needs to be reinforced: hospitals in the small cities need to be maintained. Progress allowed by the use of ICT need to be used in a more generalized way.

*In the PADIMA partnership, innovation in the care sector has not been observed as such, but we have seen examples of initiatives to promote the installation of retired people: like for example the municipality of Rättvik, Sweden, that attracts older retired people from the big cities by combining the attraction of beautiful surroundings and lively culture with a good network of hospitals that they market proactively.*



**Check** also: [PEOPLE](#) (project INTERREG IVC providing a lot of knowledge and successful initiatives on the use of ICT), [DART](#) (INTERREG IVC project on Declining, Ageing and Regional Transformation), [IMMODI](#) (INTERREG IVC project has also investigated widely on the subject of e-health services in mountain areas).

**Communicate positively  
your region & promote  
volunteering**

The older generations have been mentioned as having a particularly important role in mountain areas thanks to their involvement as volunteers in very many sectors, especially in Northern countries, Norway and Sweden.

This is a strong point for mountain areas as people unite and work in their own organizations for their values or interests; this is an important democratic and social development function for the counties, both from a democratic and from a social point of view and should be further strengthened.



## How to do it in practice?

### *Promote the area as a nice place to live & Strengthen the links with people who have moved out*

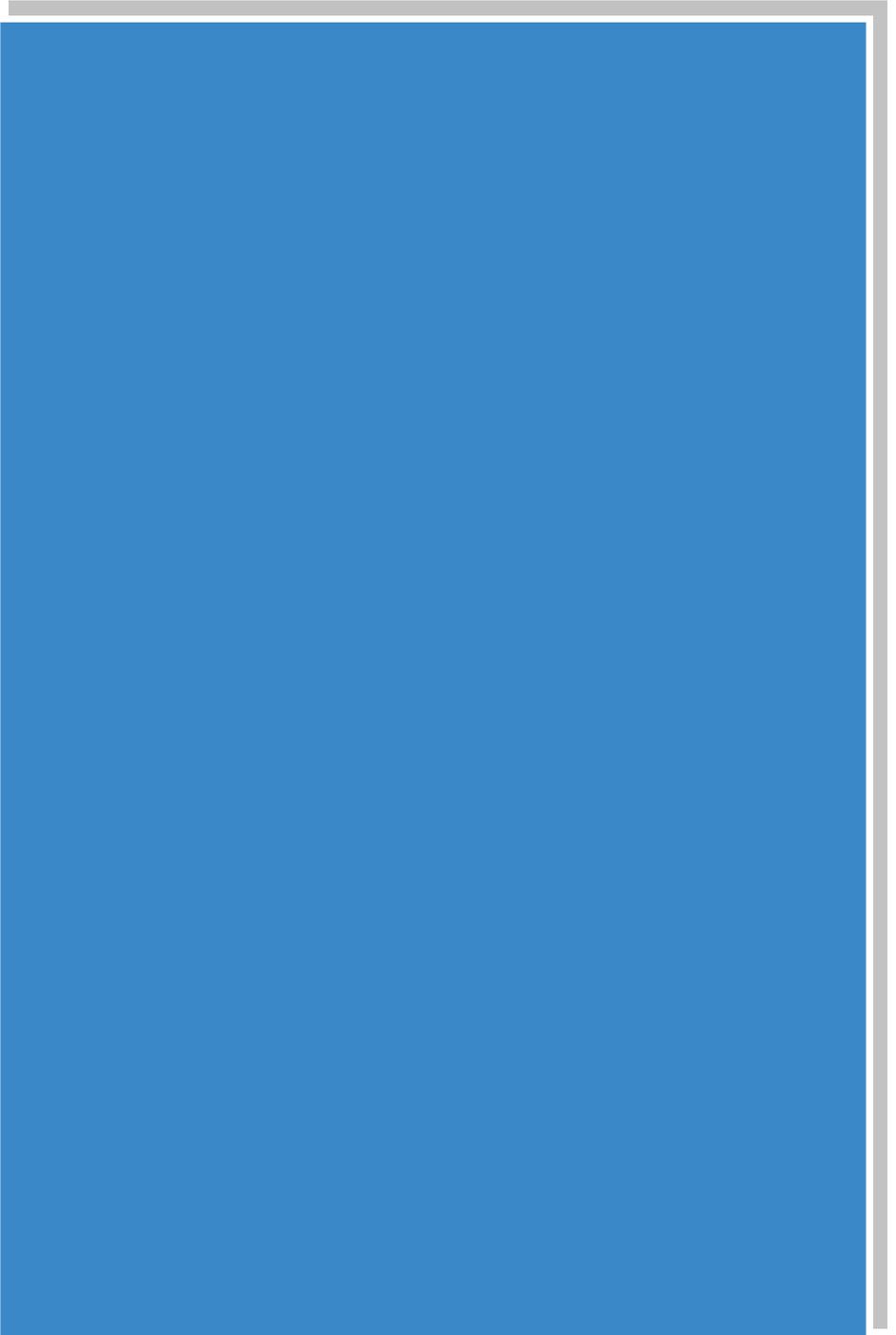
People who have moved out are not necessarily final about their decision. They might come back. And while they are away, they talk about the region. Retired people living in the area can be excellent ambassadors to people from outside!

*In region Dalarna, Sweden, through the campaign called “Contact” (GP3, WP2) the region has actively involved inhabitants of the region (by asking them contact data of their relatives, friends who have left the region and involving them as ambassadors of the regions in the further contacts with the diaspora). Retired people have been very helpful in doing this work!*

*The “MoveHere” campaigns organised in Hedmark have been also quite successful. Politicians and volunteers from the municipalities have all called people who had moved out, on to tell them they were missed and tell them also what sort of life they could get if they came back.*

*Some people moved back as a result!*





## More information

Further information on this subject can be found on the website [www.padima.org](http://www.padima.org) in the final report of the project **Strategies to increase the attractiveness of mountain areas: how to approach depopulation in an integrated manner?**

We also offer you brochures about:

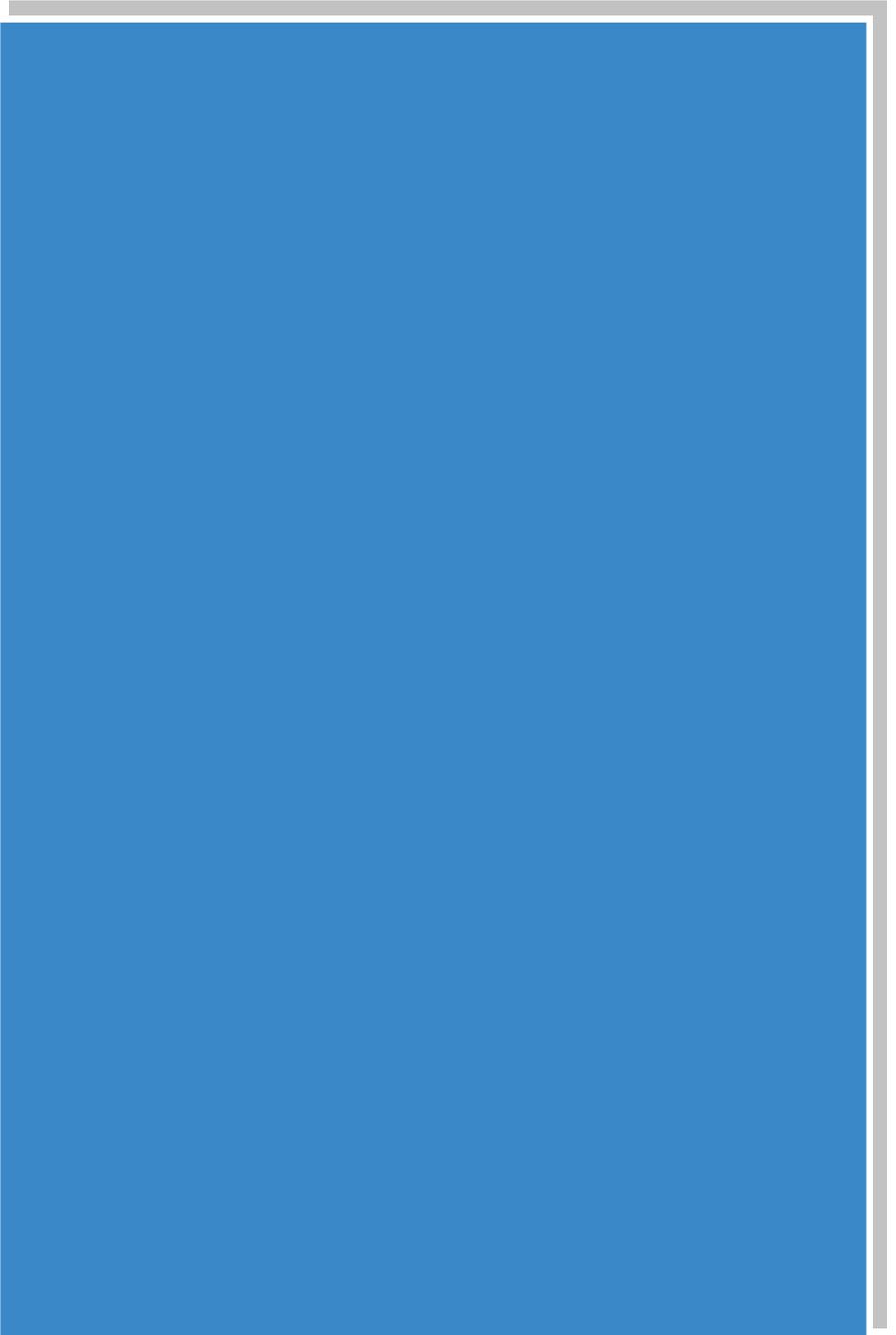
- Increasing mountain attractiveness for young people
- Increasing mountain attractiveness for working age people

You may also want to check the results of the INTERREG project [DART](#), specifically on silver economy.

The content of the brochure was developed in the course of the INTERREG IVC project PADIMA (*Policies Against depopulation in mountain areas*).

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