



# PADIMA

## Policies Against Depopulation In Mountain Areas

Newsletter no 2, November 2011

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### What is PADIMA about?

PADIMA is an innovative INTERREG IVC project looking at the opportunities of developing the human capital in mountain areas, with the aim of exchanging good practices in fighting depopulation in mountain areas. 8 partners from 5 European countries are engaged in a 3-year collaboration that will produce policy guidelines on successful methods to attract new inhabitants to mountain areas. The regions studied during this project include mountain territories and communities from: Teruel province (Spain), Lombardy and Piemonte region (Italy), Hedmark and Buskerud counties in Norway, Dalarna region in Sweden and Massif Central in France.

**We do believe that in order to be able to satisfy inhabitants' needs and to attract new population, mountain regions need to be able to provide people with good living conditions. The population needs to find diverse employment opportunities, to be offered public services, education and training facilities of good quality. Regions must also be able to communicate about themselves in order to be known by people who could be interested in moving there.**

Thus the partnership has identified 3 key themes: education and training, territorial marketing, economic diversification which will be focusing successively.

### Increasing the attractiveness of mountain areas through territorial marketing

The PADIMA partnership is motivated by the belief that mountain areas can provide a quality of life that is better than in cities; but these areas very often suffer from a negative image of remoteness, lack of diversity and cultural isolation. Improving their image and promoting their quality of life can improve the attractiveness of these territories for their own inhabitants and for lowlands inhabitants.

The Dalarna region in Sweden and the county of Hedmark in Norway have been focusing for a long time on this particular theme and are leading the reflection and the exchange of good practices inside the partnership on this topic. The lead partner of PADIMA, the province of Teruel, in Spain, has also concentrated a lot on territorial marketing in the past 10 years and as a result has obtained positive results in terms of attraction of new inhabitants to mountain areas.

This newsletter communicates some key findings and main conclusions of the work done by the partnership. These results are being extensively addressed within the WP2 Policy Guide (to be published in December 2011).

Project cofinanced by:



The opinions expressed here are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the positions of EU programmes.

## Methodology

During the period September 2010 – June 2011 PADIMA partnership focused on the theme of the territorial marketing. The work done consisted of several steps and was undertaken by all partners:

- Collection of quantitative data regarding the territories: population statistics (gender and age), population development from 1950-2009, immigration, employment/unemployment opportunities, tourist traffic, the voluntary sector involvement, moving in/out motives and symbols used for the communication of the region.
- Realisation of SWOT-analysis regarding the perceived attractiveness of selected territories in order to assess assets and constraints for their development.
- Analysis of these findings and writing of first policy recommendations; this part was produced by an external expert: Professor Peter de Sousa from Hedmark University College (Norway).
- Identification and collection of good practice from the selected territories. A good practice as understood in PADIMA methodology is an initiative, action, project or policy that improves the attractiveness of mountain areas for native people and/or to new inhabitants, promotes mountain areas as good places to work and live or facilitates settlements in mountain areas. We had a look at the transferability conditions and will further transfer some good practices between partners.
- Interviews of informants and privileged witnesses of the selected good practices to obtain information about conditions and factors that contribute to the success of different initiatives.



Seminar in Trysil on Territorial Marketing 24-25 May 2011

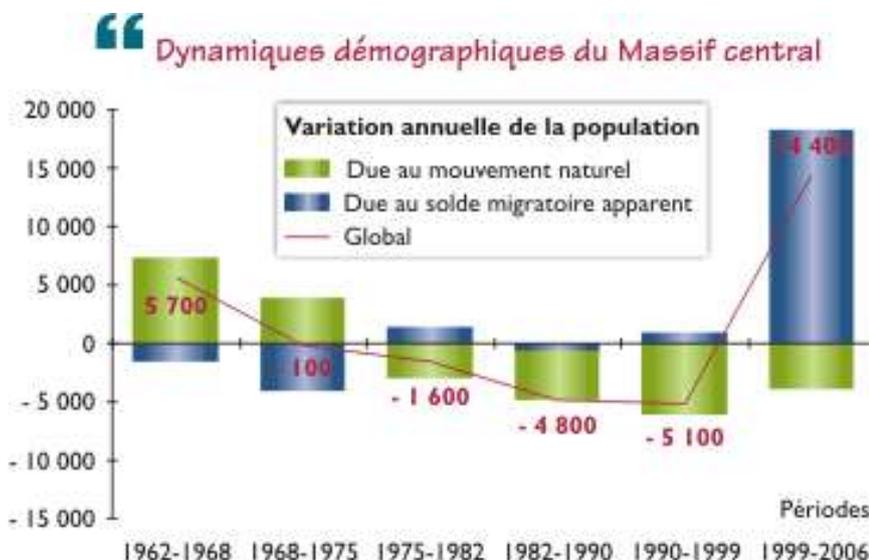
The collection of quantitative data and good practices was presented in Trysil, Norway the 24-25 May 2011, during a public seminar. PADIMA partners, the external expert Peter de Sousa from the University College of Hedmark together with some 40 mountain stakeholders debated on the interest of the collected data and the transferability of good practices.

### Why should mountain areas focus on territorial marketing?

With this work we wanted to study the link between the capacity of mountain territories to communicate positive and attractive messages about the area to people living there and elsewhere and local demographic trends. The main finding of our work on territorial marketing is the fact that mountain areas do suffer

from a spontaneous negative image which makes these territories less attractive to some categories of people. But the regions which have taken measures against this and created image-building campaigns, branding or marketing plans communicating both the positive aspects of the life in the mountain area and combating the negative image are successful and manage to attract new inhabitants to their mountain areas.

To highlight this evolution, we can have a look at the demographic dynamics taking place in the Central Massif, France.



Source : Insee, Recensements de la population - État civil  
<http://www.insee.fr/auvergne> - Insee Auvergne Les Dossiers n°24

## Seminar on Successful Territorial Marketing in Mountain Areas

*46 delegates met on 24-25<sup>th</sup> May in Trysil, Norway, for two constructive days of exchange of experience and discussion on how to make the best use of territorial marketing to improve the image and attractiveness of mountain areas. The interim results of the quantitative and qualitative data collection from the PADIMA territorial marketing work package were presented and discussed with the audience.*

PADIMA partners presented the results of their work, including an assessment of their situation regarding demographic trends and territorial attractiveness together with good practices and policies identified in study areas. Based on this analysis, they also formulated some first policy recommendations. Finally, they discussed their results in a very animated round table, with policy representatives and European stakeholders. The discussion addressed the relevance of the data collected, the interest and potential transferability of the good practices collected and the perspectives for future action.

The seminar presented some very positive news. It showed indeed that there are people willing to move to the mountain areas in search of a different kind of life. Many of the municipalities of the PADIMA partnership have increased their population lately as a result of positive migration balance and despite there being fewer births than deaths.

This should have positive effects on local economies as many people moving to the areas are or can become entrepreneurs and contribute to the mountain economy in diverse ways.

Overall, the seminar provided a lot of inspiring ideas to make mountain areas the most welcoming regions of tomorrow. You can consult the detailed report of the seminar and the presentations made at [www.padima.org](http://www.padima.org).

On 25<sup>th</sup> May, participants discovered on field some successful initiatives that have proven results in retaining and attracting population to remote mountain areas of Hedmark (Norway) and Dalarna (Sweden).



### Key findings from the PADIMA territorial marketing surveys and good practices exchange: Strategy to foster the positive image creation for mountain areas

The work undertaken by the partnership leads to some conclusions that can be synthesized as follows:

- A balanced picture must be built: there is a tension between a traditional image of mountain areas and a more up to date, modern image of these areas. Both have good and bad sides. Territorial marketing must seek to promote the positive sides, while being honest about the negative sides as well- maybe communicating on the hidden potential related to these negative trends: ageing for example is both a weakness and an opportunity for creating new jobs. Thus the weaknesses are looked at in a challenging way and transformed in opportunities. The **good practice “The Santa Maria Foundation Albarracin” from Teruel, Spain is in this case illustrative as a project of comprehensive management of the cultural heritage.** The approach is global: by using last-minute architectural and building restoration knowledge on different sites and ICT tools to widely promote the cultural potential and the touristic offer outside the area. For more information, please refer to our territorial marketing good practice collection, initiative 27 page 92.

- Communication and visibility: respondents to surveys and participants at the territorial marketing seminar stressed the necessity to communicate more, using all sorts of media and fresh stories. The under-exploited potential of social media has been discussed a lot as well as the existence of people who are not connected to them and need to be addressed in more traditional ways. The challenge is to get the right story, to the right target group with the right communication tool, be it phone, post, network, email or others.
- Regional pride and identity is important: successful marketing relies on local inhabitants being the first ambassadors of their region engaging with tourists and new inhabitants: it is important that people living in mountain areas have a strong sense of identity and are proud of their area to promote it well to others. **“Inhabitants are the best ambassadors of a region”, was stressed by professor de Souza.**

Several examples of good practice have been collected by the partnership in this respect ie. **“Move to the mountain region”** action realised in Hedmark, Norway. This initiative was developed within 2001-2011 and consisted of several campaigns:

- ⇒ Contact campaigns i.e. by phone and postcards where people living in the mountain region contacted their family or friends with roots in the region but living elsewhere. The people calling proposed them to come back, insisting on the good parts of living there. Some of the people called have moved. Many of them are considering moving. *It feels good to hear that someone misses you!*
- ⇒ Hunting for heroes: focused on potential entrepreneurs. Local entrepreneurs were promoted and invited to talk to others about their positive experiences in business.
- ⇒ Immigrant Hosts: focused on the necessity to have, in every municipality, an employee in charge of new comers who can meet them in a professional way.

- Customer approach: territorial marketing is not only about knowing who we are and what our assets are but also knowing what the **“business environment”** is (what is the situation in the neighbouring regions) and what the **“customers”** (potential migrants) are looking for. Partners have presented interesting prospection, survey and detection tools. Several of the good practice examples stress as well the importance of targeting a clear and well defined category of people, ie. *Auvergne changes your life*, web campaigns targeted at young people and families with one or two kids – and who are very likely to use the internet and to get interested in the web campaigns.
- Long-term commitment: **participants agreed that a long time is needed to “build” a territorial reputation.** Territorial marketing is an investment which might not deliver results immediately but gradually. To allow this, initiatives must be sustained and not be organised only as short term projects. The most illustrative in this respect is **Dalarna’s regional branding strategy, developed during the last 8 years and is an on-going process.**

The Dalarna regional brand was created and communicated through several actions which were:

1. **“The image of Dalarna”** - conducted in 2003 in order to find out the opinion of Dalarna from people outside the region and to start creating a regional branding platform for Dalarna.
2. **“Contact 1”** – a telephone campaign exercise, as the first concrete activity with a migration perspective (and the embryo to the following action)
3. **“Move to Dalarna”** campaign - launched in 2007.
4. **“Contact 2”, the chat event**
5. **In 2009 “Contact 3”, another telephone contact exercise was directed to young people**
6. **the “Significance of Icons”** - image development
7. **“Words about a place”** -project stressing on a need for fresh stories and a renewal of words describing Dalarna
8. Identification of communicative keys specific for Dalarna: Proud, Progressive and Real
9. **“Contact 4”, “Meet Dalarna”, an event for those returning from other parts of the country to their “home”, is planned for this September 2011.**
10. **Visual identity: development of a logo that signals “Dalarna”; it is accompanied by an image bank, words/text, stories and presentations.**

- The gender issue exists: the provinces of Hedmark, Dalarna and Teruel and Vallembrembana (Italy) highlight the fact that young women leave the mountain regions as they cannot see an attractive future there. The labour market mainly caters men and there is an old-fashioned gender structure that makes women prefer to move in larger cities. What has been highlighted by people in the field is that if one wants to attract more women to mountain regions structural changes must be made in the first place so that women can support themselves and focus on entrepreneurship. Then it's easier to make some changes in the "gender contracts". No women today means no babies tomorrow, no services and no future for these areas and this is not how the partnership sees the future for their mountain areas.

*In Vallembrembana, in the small village of Ornica, situated in the heart of Orobic's Alps, a cooperative of women (called "Donne di Montagna", "Women from Mountains") planned and are now managing a network of small B&Bs, created in the old houses of the town left un tenanted by inhabitants emigrating to urban areas. This is by now an important tourism initiative, because tourists can discover and spend holidays in Ornica, but it is also an important gender issue as this way, the women of the village have job opportunities on-site and they **don't have to leave Ornica to work**. For more information see the Good Practices Collection on Territorial Marketing good practice 17 page 58.*

In Buskerud Norway, an initiative called *WomenInnovation* aiming at the integration of women in the labor market has been presented as a good practice. *Wominnovation aims to give female entrepreneurs inspiration, motivation, the knowhow and the competence to make a dream reality. [www.wominnovation.org](http://www.wominnovation.org) is a place where female entrepreneurs can meet and where they are helped to put their idea into practice. Through success stories, news, activities and courses across the country the portal aims to inspire and be beneficial. WomenInnovation demonstrates the opportunities for women to create their own workplace through:*

1. *Competence and skills development*
2. *Business and commercial network*
3. *Inspiration to start their own business or company.*

- Collective action, networking, partnership and multi-level governance: all good practices collected within PADIMA include a strong partnership dimension and require the involvement of the various levels of governance (from national to local).
- The voluntary sector – **an opportunity to be used... with moderation!** The voluntary sector is extremely important for the development of mountain and rural areas in general. This unpaid work done by enthusiastic people offers a variety of culture, sports and other events that engage people and make our mountain areas even more alive. These people represent a potential for efficient positive territorial marketing and they need to be **encouraged and supported!** However, the downside of the volunteering and "active" organisations is that those people who are active tend to be used too much and the burn-out phenomenon is common in these situations. Also, the equilibrium between volunteering and paid work should be kept in order not to impose the unpaid work and thus weaken the social structures in mountain areas.

- Forward thinking: mountains are often presented as lagging or handicapped regions. The collection of good practices and the discussions during the Trysil seminar demonstrated, once more, that mountain areas are rather ahead in thinking. They have understood that, besides the centralisation and urbanisation movement, there is also a counter-urbanisation movement that can be taken advantage of, when EU debates seem to concentrate a lot on urban dimension. Anticipation has been promoted as a key element of strategy building: positive as well negative trends need to be properly analysed and adaptation must be integrated in planning.



Slovakia.

Source: Birte Vietor

- Attracting different categories of people: As most of our regions are characterized by ageing population it is very easy to draw the conclusion that we must concentrate our resources on attracting young families with children, preferably self-employed. But, we must also remember that **there may exist other categories... Elderly** people of today are healthier and live a more active life after their retiring than ever before: they are certainly good consumers of goods and services and keen to be involved in the voluntary sector. We often talk about this category as a burden instead of as an asset. Maybe this group is easier to attract as they search for a higher quality of life as they gain more leisure time. But it is important that we remain open-minded concerning the categories of people we want to target!



Source: <http://karpuramanjari.blogspot.com/>

- Funding: the problem of resources has been raised, with three dimensions: internal funding (having enough **resources to finance authorities' staff and initiatives at municipality level**), external funding (attracting co-financing from national and EU levels) and an extraordinary resource which is the voluntary sector and which plays a major role in many initiatives.
- Cooperation versus competition: all partners agreed on the importance of cooperation as a source of ideas to be used for strategy building. The question of competition between mountain regions and between mountain regions and big urban centres for the attraction or retention of population has also been raised. The discussions in the Trysil seminar highlighted the multiplying effect of simultaneous communication by different mountain regions of the positive alternative way of life they can provide. The lack of focus on potential and development of remote rural and mountain areas has been highlighted at present at European level. The tendency to believe that growth will only be achieved in metropolitan areas and furthermore reflected around cities is to be justified. The challenge is therefore to promote all these alternative territories together, to shift the common thinking to more open-minded and balanced territorial approach.



Source: University of Sheffield Enterprise

### What recommendation should we make to policy makers in order to transfer these findings in effective policies?

In the realisation of these recommendations we have started from the main finding of our work on territorial marketing which is the fact that mountain areas do suffer from a spontaneous negative image which makes these territories less attractive to some categories of people. The presence of a negative image of peripheral, sparsely populated areas **is spontaneously created and recreated in the minds of some inhabitants and of some "outsiders" or tourist. To counter this stereotype one needs to include, in any image-building, branding or marketing plan, not only the positive, advantageous picture of the place, area or destination, but also to confront and handle the ingrained, negative one.**

In order to be successful in realizing territorial branding, image buildings and/or marketing plans, we have identified some key aspects to be taken into account:

### ⇒ Governance:

- Integrated place-bound strategies must be realised. Making analysis, planning and implementation in different projects, structures and processes more interdependent with general strategic concerns and sectoral consideration in a holistic perspective based on a prioritized link with the place, area, community or destination. When focussing on, for instance, migration and tourism, care should be taken to relate this to an advanced degree to the unique and special characteristics of the place in question.
- Work in networks: Territorial marketing demands alliances. Both intermunicipal/inter-area and inter-sectoral. Territorial marketing also demands multi-level governance approaches. The need for network building and alliances between administrative entities on specific administrative levels is an important **priority. It's success is dependent partly on integrating vertical benevolent governance and/or administrative principles on the basis of subsidiarity.** Finding functions, for example in cultural programmes and coordination, where there are clear benefits of cooperation between different administrative entities.

### ⇒ Content needs to be created in a strategic way:

- Comprehensiveness is needed in the approaches taken. Comprehensiveness indicates a holistic, strategic perspective in this approach to image and brand building. It needs to include the different actors and the different steps of image creation and communications. And then one needs to accept also its long-term perspective. An approach like this needs substantiated analysis and a planned, regulated implementation.
- Integrate gender perspectives to a much higher degree in analysis, policy development and implementation. For example, the specifics of the labour market situation both on the supply and demand side, or disaggregating dimensions of migration and tourism with much more detail in regard to gender issues.
- Invite academia at an early stage. An analysis and evaluation of project results will benefit from the inclusion of the academic/consultant being part of outlining the project in more detail, following the development and gathering the results.
- Regular, systematic evaluation and monitoring of the projects – is important. A systematic approach for evaluating project development, impact and dissemination of experience and lessons needs to be taken care of. It must be developed in a very effective way, taking into account the specificities of each project.

### ⇒ Cooperation:

- Strategies of complementing incomplete networks can be one way of optimizing the use of scarce resources especially in sparsely populated areas. With a network approach it is possible to identify crucial functions of multipurpose benefits for business, quality-of-life etc. For instance, in the voluntary sector, one of the ways to promote the volume and efficiency of that is to create a support program that makes the voluntary work in itself easier. That could be accountancy work, information network building etc.

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## Our next events

29-30 November 2011: Economic diversification seminar, Le Puy en Velay, France

22-24<sup>th</sup> May 2012: **Interregional training session** “*Developing strategies to attract and welcome new migrants and new populations in mountain areas*” held in **Dalarna, Sweden**,

**June 2012: Final conference of the project in Brussels**

18-20 September 2012: **Interregional training session** “*Economic diversification in mountain areas*”, Northern Italy

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Picture: European Parliament, Brussels

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## TO KNOW MORE

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Our project partners are:

