



Crossing generations, crossing mountains: where are we going?

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With the support of the Transversal
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Big Foot. Crossing generations, crossing mountains



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Against marginalization of the rural mountain areas and
their ageing population

Focusing on valorization and maintenance of the elderly
population, traditional knowledge and specific local
culture.

January 2011 – December 2012... and maybe more



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Partners



- Comune di Gubbio - IT
- Gouré s.r.l – IT
- Menon Network - BE
- Association Européenne des Elus de Montagne - FR
- Centre for Development of North-West Bulgaria - BG
- Trikala Development Agency S.A. - GR
- UNEP_Regional Office for Europe_Carpathian Convention - AT
- CNR- Institute for international legal studies - IT

Why



Mountains are facing many challenges, including the lack of economic opportunities, and as a result migration of the younger population towards urban centers.

This process exacerbates the challenges of the rural mountainous areas and leads to the loss of traditional knowledge by breaking the connection between the older and younger generations.

Misunderstanding

Generally:

economic and demographic growth + significant increase in population.



Primarily in low-lying valleys and in areas that have good access to transport routes.

Tourism is not as widespread as generally assumed.

The Alps have not been affected by modern development and the economy and population are declining, with some areas in danger of becoming completely abandoned.

Constraints



Remoteness and accessibility : lack of services, lack of knowledge and skills

Constraints on agricultural activity due to soils and climate

Sparseness of businesses, size of businesses, and difficulty in passing them on to younger generations

Sparseness of population; difficulty of reaching the critical mass necessary to provide services of general interest ; low attractiveness of seasonal jobs (low and precarious incomes)

Problems



- Depopulation and radical social modification
- Disappearing of traditional knowledge / techniques

Imbalances



Traditional knowledge has proven to be enormously valuable, leading to what is now recognized as sustainable environmental management.

New imbalances:

- social
- hydrogeological (landslides...)

Definitely

The cultural heritage has run the risk of disappearing because of depopulation and social modifications.



Traditional activities, techniques and specific know how, that were at the base of mountain economy, have been almost completely abandoned and it is particularly difficult to stimulate a generation-turnover.

Handicraft culture and traditional techniques are a unique heritage that must be preserved and turned into an economic opportunity, in order to enhanced the territory, maintain the population and improve local services.

The solutions

Economic development : to increase the value given to existing activities and to diversify economies.



Human capital : to facilitate the passing on of businesses to younger generations; to promote entrepreneurship, and to develop training and the diversification of skills.

Natural and heritage resources: to better manage the environment, water, waste, energy, and landscapes

Culture and traditions : to ensure that all generations share the positive links between economy and nature

The idea

To bridge the gap...



...establishing intergenerational learning and dialogue in the mountain areas, enabling and valuating the skills and knowledge of the older generation, combining traditional knowledge with modern communication tools and expertise in order to enable creative and productive joint solutions for local sustainable development.

The goals



- Involving communities into an innovative and effective process for creating development opportunities in mountain areas, via identifying useful local resources and finding ways to benefit from them.
- Elaborating a model for the development of rural areas focusing on reliance on internal resources for its implementation - through the valorization of local elderly people.
- Establishing connections between participating local people from different mountain areas across Europe to enable their cooperation and experience exchange.
- Finding and compiling good practices that can be disseminated at regional level.

Participation...and volunteering...



Public involvement has become a key concept in conservation management and in development worldwide.

Public participation can also divide stakeholders, making it really difficult for any effective coalition of stakeholders to emerge.

The approach...



Intergenerational Community Service Learning Approach

A combination of experiential learning and community service opportunities, by integrating and matching senior citizens experiences with community needs.

Promoting a concern about community needs and issues and a commitment to being involved.

The process

1st STAGE



Selected communities in four countries (Bulgaria, Greece, Italy) will participate in a “participatory mapping”: a process of consultation driven by the locals and discovering the local perspective, with a goal to identify the needs and to evaluate the characteristics of target groups and environmental, historical, cultural resources.

Why participatory mapping?



It provide a valuable visual representation of what a community perceives as its place.

Can influence the internal dynamics of a community.

Can contribute to:

- building community cohesion
- stimulate community members to engage in decision-making, raise awareness about pressing issues and ultimately contribute to empowering local communities and their members.

Why participatory mapping?

To allow communities to record and archive local knowledge, to use mapping projects to collect and preserve cultural histories and to record their elders' knowledge about their land.

To increase the capacity within communities: it brings community members together to share their ideas and visions, which can contribute to building community cohesion.

The map-making process can also act as a focus for discussion about local issues

PM process



1. Preparing the community for the mapping activity
2. Determining the purpose(s) of making a map
3. Collecting information
4. Creating the map and determining the legend
5. Analysing and evaluating the information

The process

2nd STAGE



The results of the participatory mapping will be used to identify and develop the learning and training intervention: a combination of experiential learning and community service opportunities, by integrating senior citizens experiences with community needs.

That is...

Elderly locals will act as trainers of younger people, tourists and interested stakeholders within three areas:



1. Tourism: promoting cultural tourism development
2. Handicrafts: training youth in the production of local handicrafts.
3. Ecology of production and consumption: training and awareness courses on the wise use of local resources for cooking, home keeping; recycling "art"

EXPECTED RESULTS



- training opportunities for young people;
- opportunities for elderly people to be socially engaged and economically active
- “grassroots” toolkit
- guide of the intangible heritage

Crossing Generations - Crossing Mountains
BIG FOOT



...we' ll be soon online...



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ACTIVITIES FORESEEN - 2 -

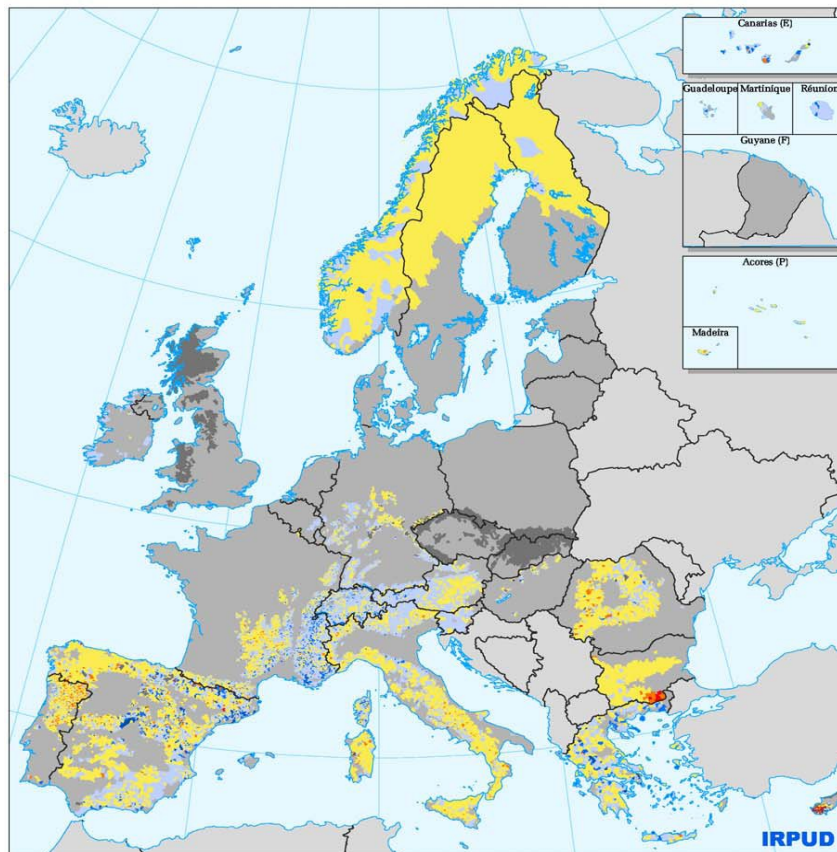


organisation in the shops of short training courses for tourists on the various techniques utilised;

organisation of thematic exhibition of arts & crafts manufactures in collaboration with all partners;

dissemination of results;

The solutions



Change in total population, 1991 - 2001 by mountain municipalities

in percent



0 500Km
 Administrative boundaries: EuroGeographics, ESRI Romania, NCRD, Okeos, Swiss Federal Statistical Office, Eurostat/SDSC



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Education and training

Territorial marketing

Economic diversification



traditional knowledge has led to what is now recognized as sustainable environmental management.

has proven to be enormously valuable

new opportunities and new imbalances

increase in cross-Alpine freight transport

The industrial development of the Alpine arc was initiated rather late in comparison with other parts of Europe



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