

WP8\_Action 8.3

# Guideline for enhanced territorial competiveness in the ASP

By ERSAF

This document is meant to give addresses towards the territorial competitiveness related to the main approaches fostered within the AlpBC project philosophy (and other related relevant projects).

## **EU2020 strategy**

The Europe 2020 strategy was launched in March 2010 to promote a smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. The strategy's goal is the achievement of a knowledge-based, competitive European economy able to preserve the EU's social market economy model and improve resource efficiency.

The Europe 2020 strategy is built around 5 headline targets: employment, research&development, climate and energy, education and the fight against poverty and social exclusion and thought a series of so-called *flagship initiatives*, in 6 fields considered to be key drivers for growth: innovation, the digital economy, employment and youth, industrial policy, poverty and resource efficiency.

After four years, the Commission has proposed to start a review of the Europe 2020 strategy and adopted the Communication "Taking stock of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth" describing some lessons on the first years of implementation.

## **Public consultation**

To inform the public about the review of the Europe 2020 strategy and seek views on its further development the Commission opened during 2014 a public consultation in order to achieve stakeholders' views on the lessons learned and the elements to be taken into account for the (in case) re-addressing.

The questions are related to

1. Taking stock: the Europe 2020 strategy over 2010-2014
2. Adapting the Europe 2020 strategy: the growth strategy for a post-crisis Europe

and the related tools.

AlpBC consortium contributed to the public consultation sending (October 2014) an answer to the questionnaire and proposing some elements related to the project approach (AlpBC but also AlpHouse).

In March 2015 the Commission delivered a document with the results of the public consultation:

*"In total 755 contributions were received from 29 countries. Social partners, interest groups and non-governmental organisations are the most represented category of respondents, followed by Member States' governments and public authorities, individual citizens, think tanks, academia and foundations, and companies. The main outcomes from the public consultation are the following:*

- *Europe 2020 is seen as a relevant overarching framework to promote jobs and growth at EU and national level. Its objectives and priorities are meaningful in the light of current and future challenges.*
- *The five headline targets represent key catalysts for jobs and growth and help to keep the strategy focused.*
- *Most of the flagship initiatives have served their purpose, yet their visibility has remained weak.*
- *There is scope and a need to improve the delivery of the strategy through enhanced ownership and involvement on the ground."*<sup>1</sup>

On the basis of the received answers the Commission summarized the situation through a SWOT analysis<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> COM (2015) 100 final - Communication From The Commission To The European Parliament, The Council, The European Economic And Social Committee And The Committee Of The Regions

<sup>2</sup> ibidem

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overwhelming support for an EU-wide jobs and growth strategy</li> <li>• Consistency of the areas covered by Europe 2020 with the challenges to be tackled</li> <li>• Relevant and mutually reinforcing targets</li> <li>• Some already tangible progress: the EU is on course to meet or closely approach the targets on education, climate and energy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of visibility of the flagship initiatives</li> <li>• Need to improve the delivery and implementation of the strategy</li> <li>• Insufficient involvement of the relevant stakeholders</li> <li>• Far from reaching the targets on employment, research and development and poverty reduction</li> </ul>
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actors willing to play an active role in the strategy</li> <li>• Close monitoring of the strategy through the European Semester</li> <li>• Alignment of Europe 2020 with the Commission's priorities (jobs, growth and investment)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The crisis has amplified divergences across and within Member States</li> <li>• Political nature of the targets and lack of ambition of Member States</li> </ul>

Among the answers in particular these following are coherent with the position expressed by the AlpBC Consortium:

The successful implementation of the strategy has been **affected by weaknesses in terms of awareness, involvement and enforcement.**<sup>3</sup> [...]

Respondents underline avenues for improving the delivery of the Europe 2020 strategy. **Better targeted communication and information, increased exchanges of experience and best practices across Member States, the involvement of all relevant levels of stakeholders, a close monitoring of progress and the introduction of incentives** to foster the commitment to the strategy's objectives are the main options favoured by the participants.<sup>4</sup>

and will be part of the addresses of the guideline together with some other specifically AlpHouse/AlpBC related elements towards territorial competitiveness.

## AlpBC project

In AlpHouse project, tradition and innovation were put in relation through competence: the project was dedicated to the building and its context, focussing on the possibility to find a balance between the alpine Building Culture elements and the Energy Efficiency; the AlpBc project proposed to enlarge the point of view to the inter-municipal level, taking into account the circular economy as a stimulation for the innovation and fostering the transferring of the skills and local identities to different levels. Both the project enhance the need to find a balance between being innovative in reaching wellbeing and a good life quality and preserving the local identity that's the heart of the alpine attractiveness (attractiveness means competitiveness of the territories) and, more important, being able to foster the local skills competences and knowledge, is also inclusive. Loop economies also promote the use (and re-use) of local resources optimizing the manufacturing and life cycle.

<sup>3</sup> ibidem

<sup>4</sup> ibidem

The solutions proposed in AlpBC based on the inter-municipal concept and the loop economies aim to a sustainable planning following the principle: “Each work implies a destruction, so, please, destroy with intelligence!”<sup>5</sup> [Luigi Snozzi, architect], so the main theme is to respect the landscape (that means competitiveness) but considering that landscape is both natural built. To conserve a forest without cutting trees at all costs could cause the widening of the forest through the grazing and fields, thus losing a part of landscape and decreasing biodiversity and ecosystems functions. The project promotes integrated policies instead of sectorial policies very hard to coordinate and, often, in contrast each other. As the building is a brick of a more complex systems, thus settlements are, which in turns, elements of the territory whose design can’t be carried out following the administrative borders: the intermunicipal level allow economies of scale, soil and resources saving, facilities integration that guarantee to citizens and visitor wellbeing and welfare, thus promoting the competitiveness of the area. Following these statements, it’s therefore clear that AlpBC (and AlpHouse) offer the models for a smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

## ***Recommendations to enhance territorial competitiveness***

Remembering that Flagship Initiatives of 2020 strategy deal with Digital agenda - Innovation Union - Youth on the move - Resource efficient Europe - An industrial policy for the globalisation era - Agenda for new skills and jobs - European platform against poverty

and that the related targets are:

- at least 75% of people aged 20-64 in employment
- 3% of GDP invested in research and development
- to cut greenhouse gas emissions by at least 20%, increase the share of renewables to 20% and improve energy efficiency by 20%
- to reduce school drop-out rates to below 10% and increase the share of young people with a third-level degree or diploma to at least 40%
- to ensure at least 20 million fewer people are at risk of poverty or social

a 10-point guide with addresses capitalizing the approaches of AS AlpHouse, AlpBC, CABEE project is therefore provided. The guideline is built around the pillars of 2020 strategy, or rather smart, green and inclusive growth.

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<sup>5</sup> Ogni intervento presuppone una distruzione, distruggi con senno.

*A decrease in the pace of production and consumption can at times give rise to another form of progress and development*  
[Pope Francis]

## Local Competitiveness Guideline

### 1. “Smart” means involvement of local Government

Reacting to European Commission proposals on Resource Efficiency Opportunities in the building sector [COM(2014) 445 final], the Committee of the Regions (CoR) raised concern that "the role of local and regional authorities had been worryingly overlooked" despite their responsibility for local housing development and resource efficiency<sup>6</sup>. This concerns is in fact dealing not only with building sector, both because the building sector is one of the most energy expensive, but because the building sector is very much related with the economy of a territory, being connected with the resource efficiency (use of materials, energy and water consumption, waste management) , the soil and landscape transformation, that's, in a word, with the attractiveness of a territory.

Local Governments' role is fundamental **to support the draft regulations orienting the sustainable land use**, to foster the application of the **Inter-Municipal-Concept approach able to create economy of scale in designing energy plants and services for the communities** (achieving again a saving in terms of land use, grey energy, energy, infrastructures realization, management costs), to promote the creation of private-public partnership and to raise awareness in their community about the importance of **sharing and participation during the design and decision-making process**.

### 2. “Smart” means support to the weaker Regions

“The Committee recognises the economic, social and environmental potential of setting out European guidelines in order to green the building industry, better manage resources and create new jobs. However, with wide regional disparities and growing pressures on local government funding, the Committee calls on the EU to develop **a compensation mechanism to help less developed regions to meet the challenges involved in creating sustainable buildings and expanding green infrastructure in those regions most affected by changes in land use**. Rural regions and small and medium-sized towns should be backed with proper investment and research into new technologies through EU funding pots such as Horizon 2020.”<sup>7</sup>

Cooperation and research projects can thus help weaker Regions to invest in rural infrastructures, to organize and support local markets, to foster community cooperation helping the small enterprises and small producers in taking advantages for instance of Rural Development Plans measures. This could be good to preserve markets while protecting the ecosystems services, since rural and small production is often more liveable and environmental-friendly.

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<sup>6</sup> <http://cor.europa.eu/en/news/Pages/building-sector.aspx>

<sup>7</sup> ibidem

### 3. “Green” means promoting design that weighs resource use against the functionality, produces energy efficient products and considers deconstruction scenarios

That’s valid for all products, from smartphones to buildings. Waste management rationalization through a circular economy approach must be applied to save resources and landscape. This approach can also trigger conditions for new markets and jobs, thus achieving social inclusion goals. The consideration while designing buildings, services, energy plants and products in general must account the life-cycle of these products for the future generations, **minimizing the carbon footprint during all the phases of the goods life: the design, the manufacturing, the management, the disposal**. On the products side research&development will play a role in this point, providing sustainable and technological advanced solutions; smart planning will guarantee similar results in spatial and energy solutions for settlements and communities.

### 4. “Green” means promoting more resource efficient construction and renovation reducing waste and through recycling/re-using

Resource efficient construction and renovation will mean less products extracted (virgin) and sent to landfill (waste), that resulting in less emissions, also helping climate change, all in all a general preservation of the environment, and a better quality of life. Again R&D will play a leading role in this point, designing advanced solutions and assessing their sustainability, **against a ‘culture of waste’ that threatens the outliving and attractiveness of EU territories**. This requires to definitely ban not-sustainable and disposable solutions, to promote light packaging and to choice for the application of economical penalizations for obsolescent solutions (see the France example), besides than finding alternatives to landfills and incinerators. This is definitely an ethical choice, but must come from the Governments (local, regional, national) first in order to be a model for citizens.

“However, the overall balance depends to a large extent on the existence of an efficient recycling system at local, regional or national level which presents an **attractive and cost-efficient alternative to landfill**. **The attractiveness of recycling alternatives is governed by the length of transport distances to recycling sites, achieving the necessary level of purity of the recycled materials and recycling and production processes**”.<sup>8</sup>

### 5. Does “green” mean green?

“Some solutions to improve the energy efficiency of a building in the use phase could make later recycling more difficult and expensive.”<sup>9</sup> **The entire life-cycle of a product – device – building – biomass plant – lighting system – infrastructure - .... must be considered, also taking into account the real behaviours of users / owners / occupiers /consumers**. The user’s approach can deeply change the efficiency of a product: so, its’ important to understand if it’s possible to orient behaviours; otherwise, if this is unrealistic, better to re-design the product itself. The local Government will be responsible for the proposal of real sustainable solutions to citizens: promotion of good practices must be accurately assessed and must be accompanied by effective regulations, otherwise being a dangerous and ineffective greenwashing operation.

<sup>8</sup> COM(2014) 445 final, pag.2

<sup>9</sup> COM(2014) 445 final, pag.3

## 6. Common approach to assess the environmental performance of buildings / settlements

A common framework of core indicators, focusing on the essential aspects of environmental impacts of buildings and settlements is often claimed; a common orientation will in fact help consumers (both private citizens and institutions) to access easily to reliable information, promoting the involvement of users and supporting their choices. CABEE Project answers to this issue, focussing on a mass oriented approach with low entry barriers and an on-going opensource support. For what concerning specifically the built environment the CESBA initiative is a bottom-up movement towards a harmonization of the sustainable assessment of the built environment in Europe, starting from the perception of actors from different EU-project that the several assessment tools require for a harmonization.

**“A Europe where a high quality living in a sustainable built environment is the common standard practice.”<sup>10</sup>**

## 7. “Inclusive” means participation and exchange

**The involvement of citizens, SMEs and artisan levels and not only of the big corporations is needed**, since there's no awareness, support, innovation and social innovation without the participation of the common citizens and non-expert. The majority of people think that EU2020 strategy is mainly related to the reduction of emission and increasing of renewable energy sources [...to cut greenhouse gas emissions by at least 20%, increase the share of renewables to 20% and improve energy efficiency by 20%]; the other elements, addressing smart and inclusive growth are often neglected, even though they are fundamental for the enhancement of the local competitiveness. This critical point was underlined also in the premises of the EU2020 consultation, and a positive aspect was that not only experts answered to the consultations. But the perception is that European level is always too far from the local communities. Cooperation AS project (and other Programmes as well) could strongly help to raise awareness about the European level, first of all if they will implement pilot activities and demonstrations involving the local communities from the beginning, thus triggering new ideas for the local development.

To foster the participation of communities from the point of view of local Governments, **the promotion of good practices is important, as well as the reporting of the worst cases and lessons-learned**. The citizens have to be well-informed that it's the sum of good or bad single behaviours that could generate rewards or penalties. The institution will work as models themselves through their choices to promote the replication of good examples, both with reference to the neighbouring Communities and to the citizens. As bad behaviours must be tackled and corrected, good behaviours can be supported through incentives ... [next point].

## 8. “Inclusive” means incentives

Rewarding the results with **incentives and promotion can foster citizens' awareness and interest**. Incentives, moreover, can support the weaker Communities to start virtuous roads towards better management and planning, to study and apply new technologies and to cooperate with other Communities.

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<sup>10</sup> [http://wiki.cesba.eu/wiki/Main\\_Page](http://wiki.cesba.eu/wiki/Main_Page)



On the other hand, economical penalizations for producers of built-in obsolescent solutions and with Life Cycle Assessment unfavourable must be foreseen, **to make the sustainable solutions attractive not only counting on 'ethical' behaviours.**

## 9. "Inclusive" means 'sharing'

The act of sharing can foster inclusion since the sharing of goods helps, on one hand, **the utilization and valorisation of an under-used product, and allow, on the other hand, to a part of Community not owning this good, to use it at a cheaper and favourable condition.** This is valid for both products and for buildings, and also for less-tangible assets (time, space...). Let's think about the now popular examples of sharing economy via peer-to-peer platforms such as the ones related to the transportation and the renting out of lodges. The sharing economy, as well as circular economy, fosters the inclusion of people (the privates become entrepreneurs), allowing the resource saving and optimization, reducing the emissions and the carbon footprint and stimulating welfare and economic growth.

**The provision of real-time sharing needs for sure to be supported by technological development and digital skills, so R&D, innovation and Digital Agenda** (for instance Open Data in local governments) can play a role, thus triggering social inclusion and new markets. There are interesting opportunities opened by the application of the 'sharing economy' approach to the second homes in mountain areas affected by the tourism decline, introducing i.e. the solution of widespread hotels. This, connected with a strong promotion of the alpine related contexts, could endorse the rebirth of some marginal and scarcely populated areas, enhancing new forms of eco, creative, sustainable tourism also impacting the local economy.

## 10. "Inclusive" means 'local'

**The small dimension is necessary for local competitiveness.** Big corporation can help in terms of promotion and marketing, but the 2020 strategy approach also needs 'small' stakeholders. Niche markets are to be preserved and fostered, so supporting small communities to preserve their specificity and local identity as a value and not as a limitation. Urban management and development highly impact the surrounding environment (transportation infrastructures, energy plants, services,...): the capability of assessing first the services guaranteed by the local (eco)systems is fundamental to provide sustainable and acceptable solutions for the communities, since each solution changes somewhere the dynamics of these communities. The design and planning must come from the definition of the needs (better if over-local needs, thus making economy of scale with the neighbouring communities) but with the involvement of the local stakeholders and assessing the use of local resources. This doesn't mean a close community, since innovation often comes from outside, but requires **a community able to define the right pace of production and consumption.** The global approach must be able to valorise the local dimension: mountain areas must be competitive preserving and fostering their identities.