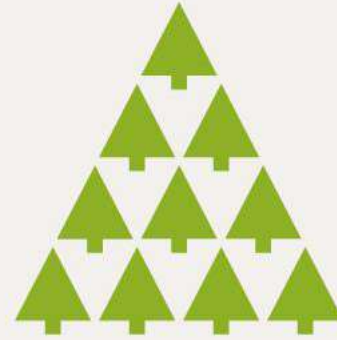


XIII European Mountain Convention

Shaping the future of mountain economies

15 - 18 October 2024 | Puigcerdà - Catalonia

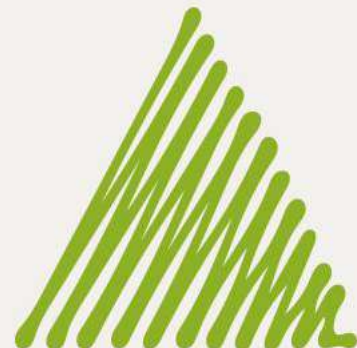
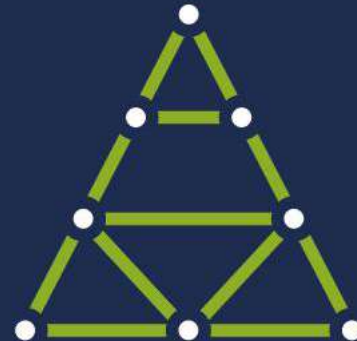


Schweizerische Arbeitsgemeinschaft für die Berggebiete
Groupement suisse pour les régions de montagne
Gruppo svizzero per le regioni di montagna
Gruppa svizra per las regiuns da muntogna

Egger Thomas

Director, Swiss center for
mountain regions SAB

The future of European mountain value chains



thomas.egger@sab.ch

Overview of the presentation

1. Looking into the past and present.
2. Megatrends –key drivers for the future.
3. How might mountain value chains possibly evolve?
4. Key findings for mountain policies.



Looking into the past and present



Mountain farming
From traditional farming
to smart farming



Looking into the past and present



Forestry and wood

- Reviving an old tradition



Looking into the past and present



Energy production

- From traditional hydropower to new renewable energies



Looking into the past and present



Industry

From energy intensive machinery to high-tech biopharma.



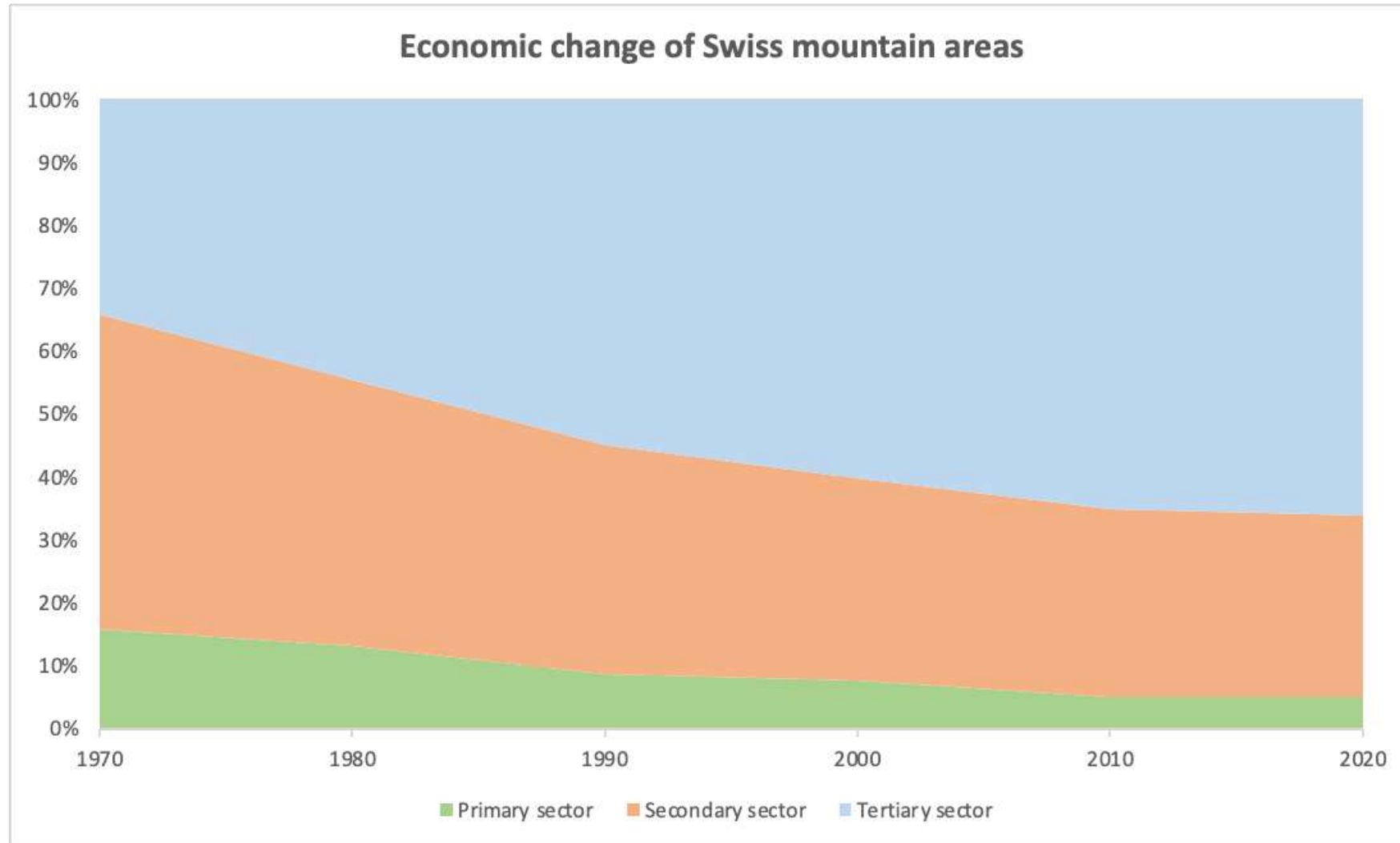
Looking into the past and present



The tourism industry
From the „belle époque“
to Instagram-tourism



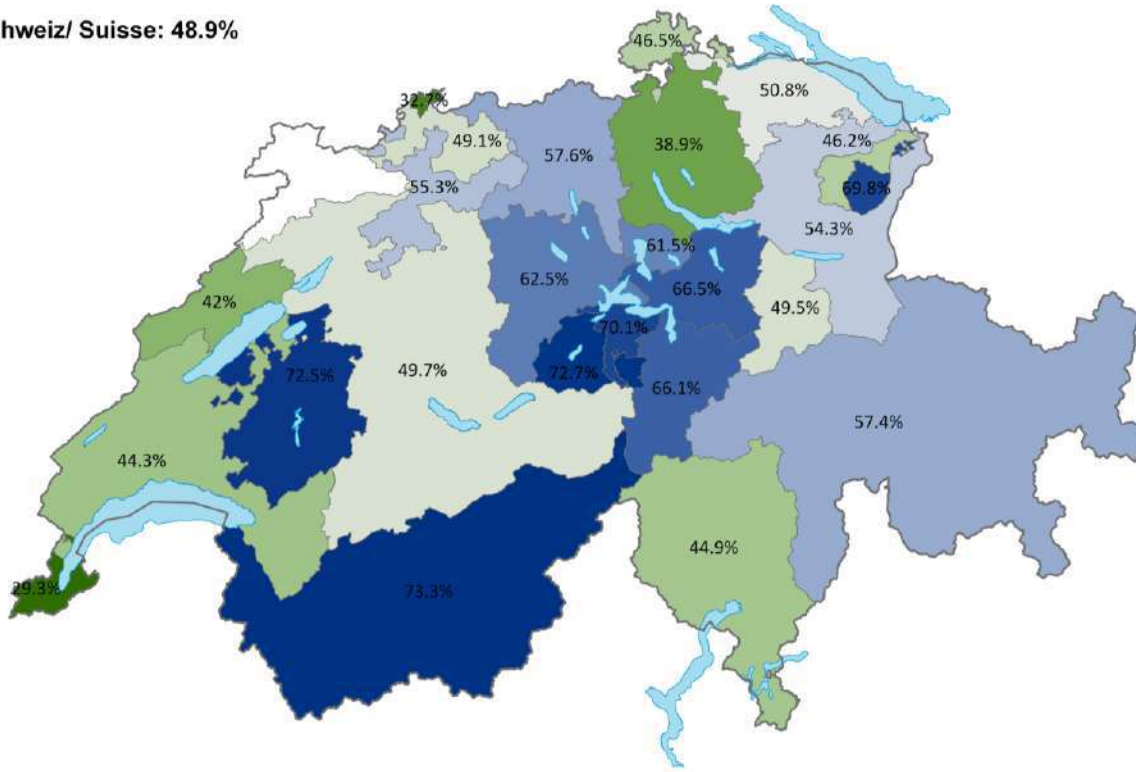
Looking into the past and present



Looking into the past and present

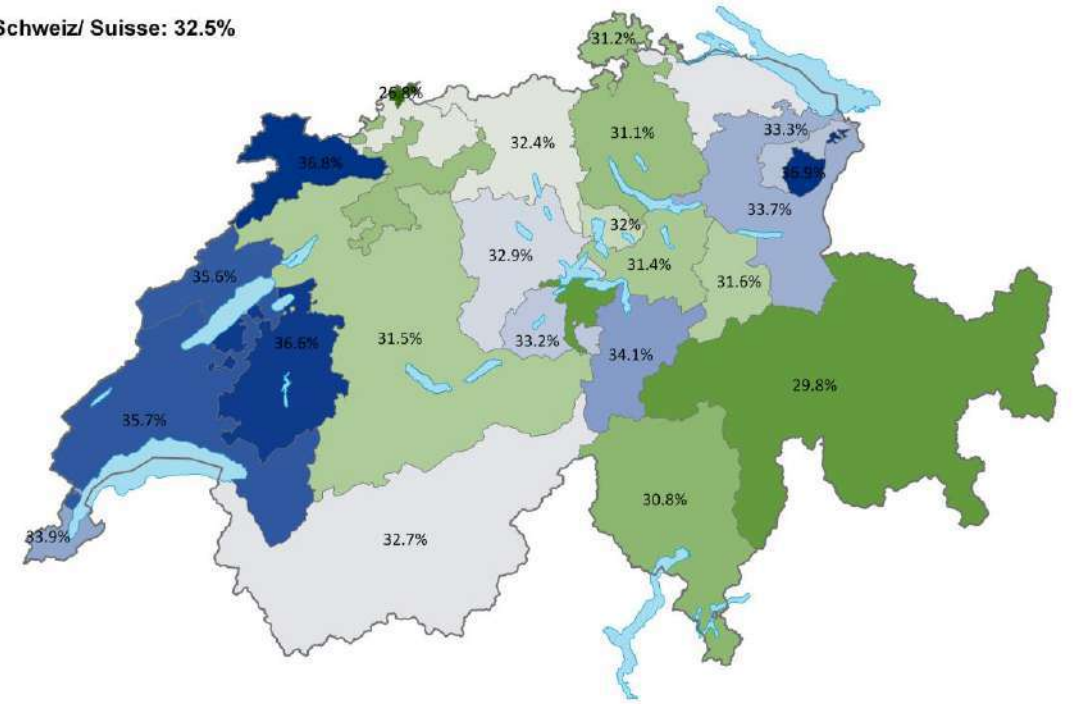
Youth dependency ratio 1941 vs 2016.

Schweiz/ Suisse: 48.9%



1941

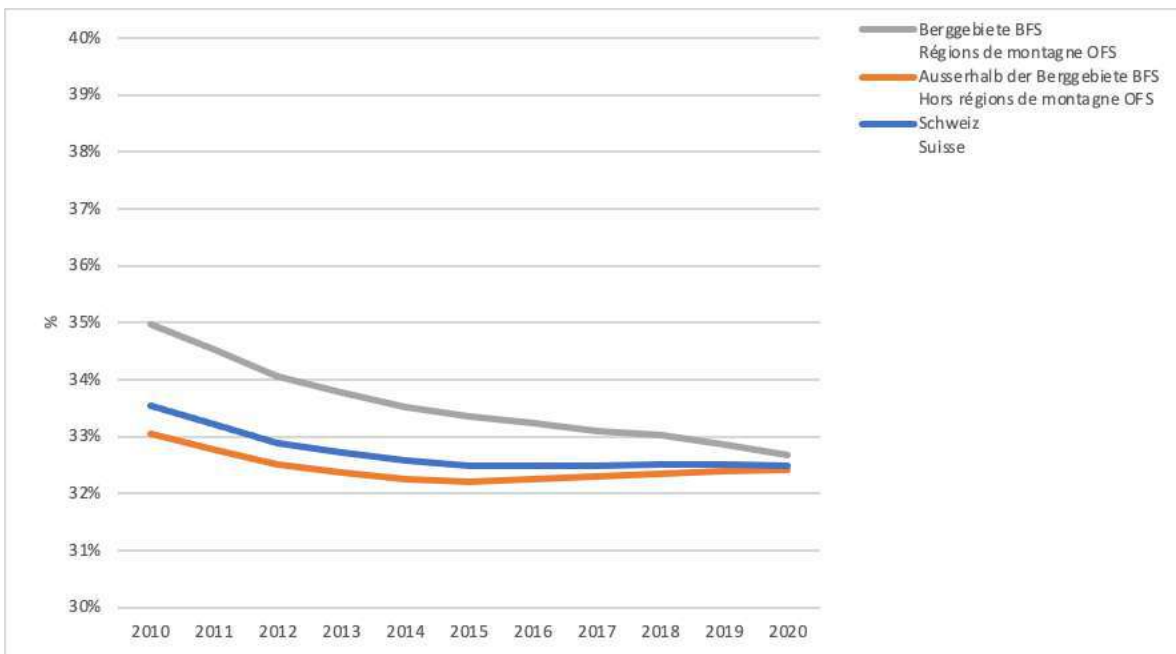
Schweiz/ Suisse: 32.5%



2016

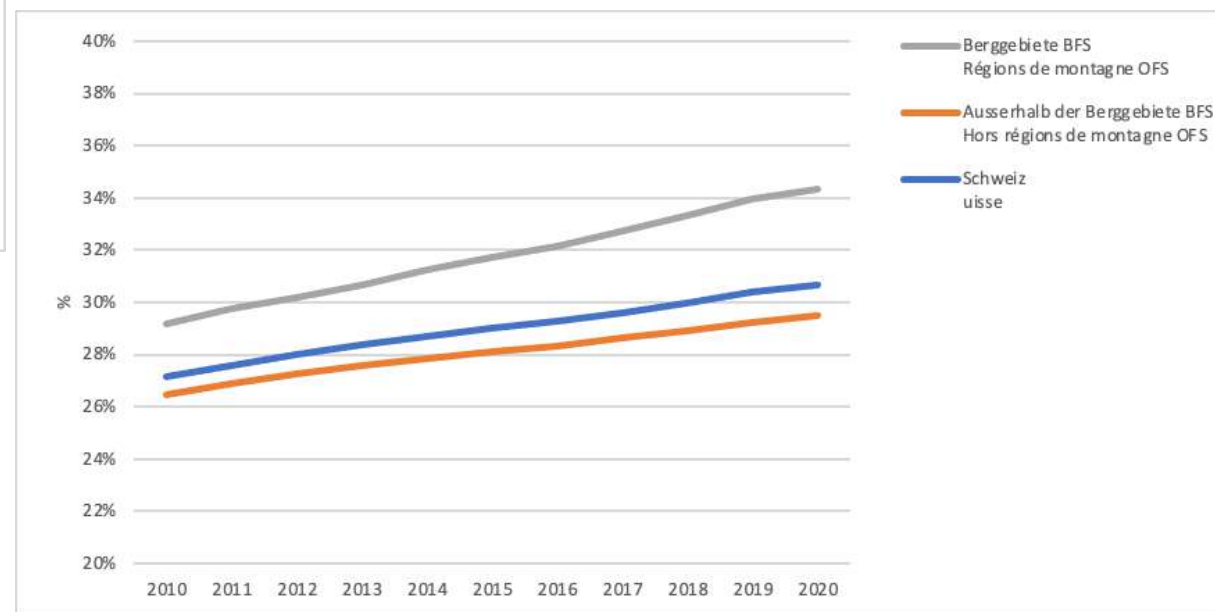


Looking into the past and present

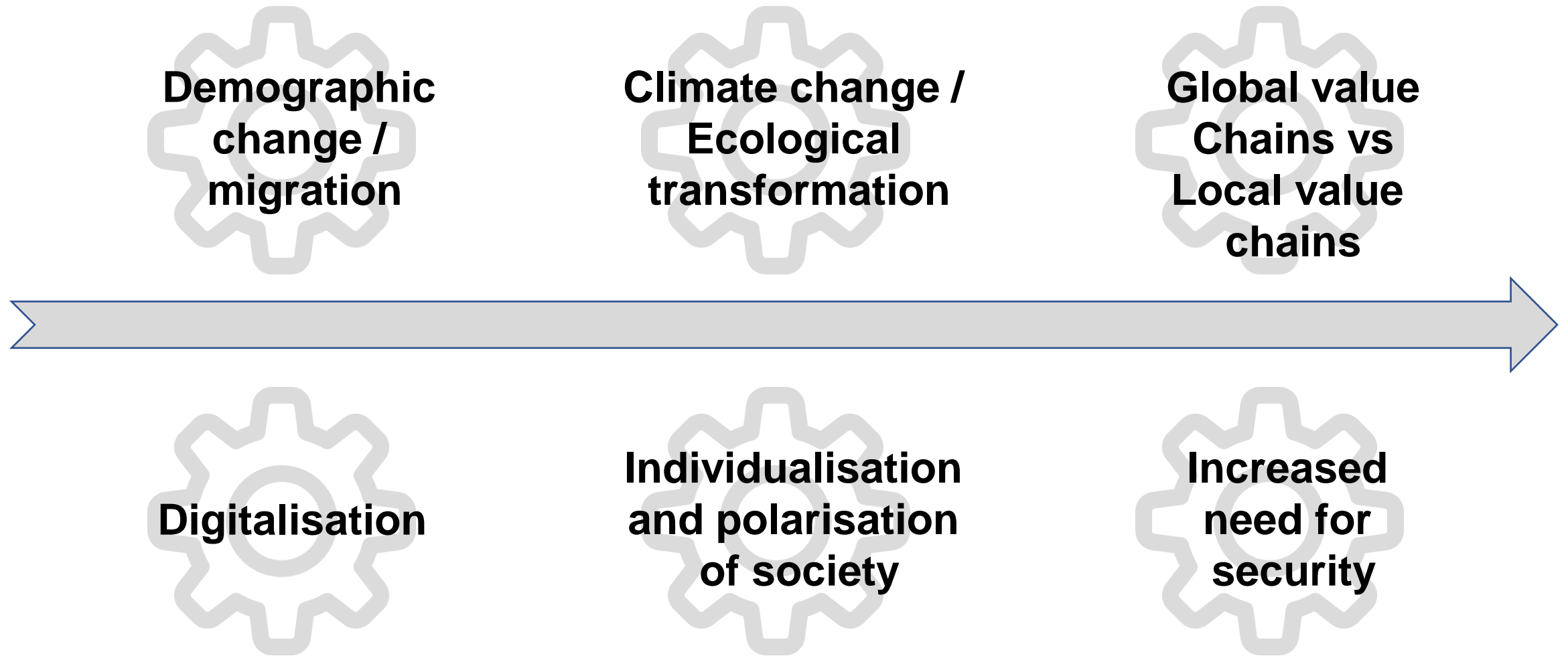


Old-age dependency ratio

Youth dependency ratio



Megatrends in spatial development – key drivers for the future



How might mountain chains possibly evolve?

Demographic change / migration

- Silver economy / Silver tourism / Slow tourism / Health tourism (...)
- Intergenerational exchanges / policies for elderly people / Involving youth
- Lack of skilled labour forces / integration of migrants into society and the labour market

<https://www.euromontana.org/silver-smes/>



How might mountain chains possibly evolve?

Climate change / ecological transformation

- Transformation of the tourism industry
- New approaches to water management
- Climate risk prevention
- Re-forestation / Carbon stockage
- Re-settlement into mountain areas

<https://www.alpine-space.eu/project/beyondsnow/>



How might mountain chains possibly evolve?

Global value chains vs local value chains

- Contribute to global value chains
- Circular economy
- Authenticity / local heritage

<https://www.alpine-space.eu/project/alpfoodway/>

<https://www.euromontana.org/wt-mountain-products/>

100%



How might mountain chains possibly evolve?

Digitalisation

- Digitalisation makes distances disappear.
- Highspeed broadband connections are the highways of the 21st century.
- The intelligent use of digitalisation offers manifold potentials (Smart villages, smart farming, industry and tourism 4.0, creation of « third places » etc.)
- E.g.: <https://www.alpine-space.eu/project/smartvillages/>



How might mountain chains possibly evolve?

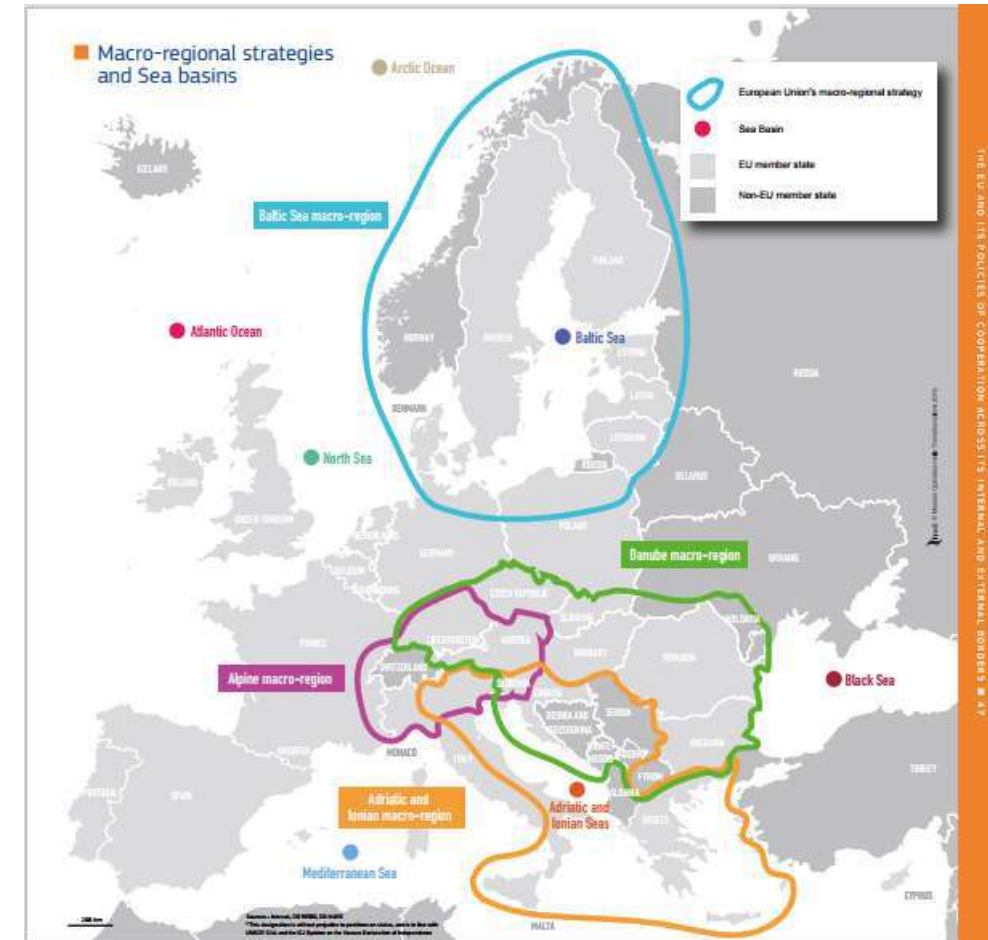
Individualisation and polarisation of society

Risks:

- Loss of solidarity / support for mountain areas

Opportunities:

- Encourage urban – rural linkages
- Cooperate across borders
(Mountains shall not be perceived as peripheries but as junctures)



How might mountain chains possibly evolve?

Increased need for security

Services of general interest are a necessary pre-condition!

Postal services, broad band access, public transport
daily needs, medical services etc.

-> integrated territorial approach!

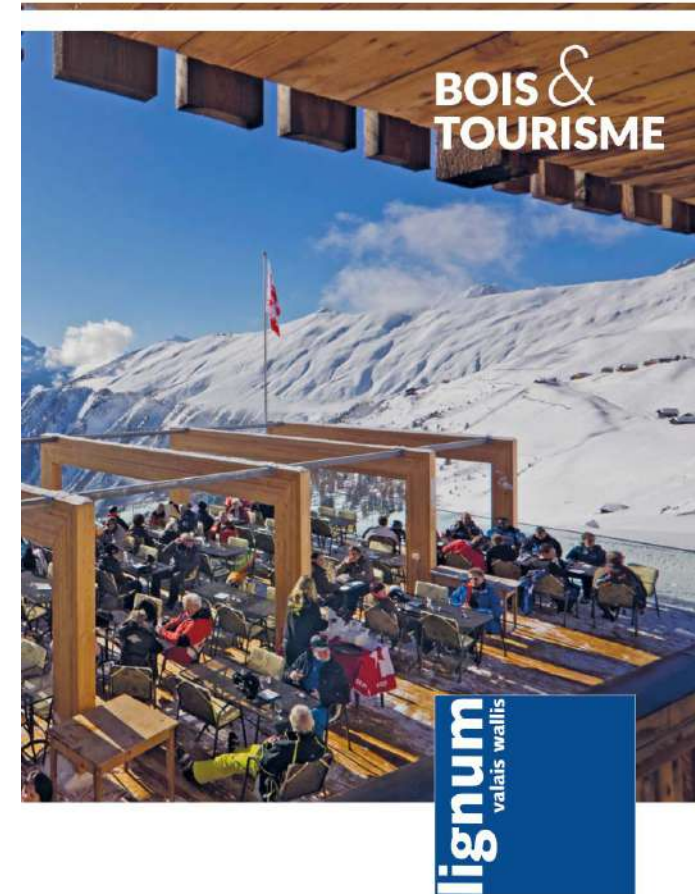
<https://www.alpine-space.eu/project/intesi/>

<https://servicepublic.ch>



Combine mountain value chains in an integrated territorial approach

Example: wood and tourism

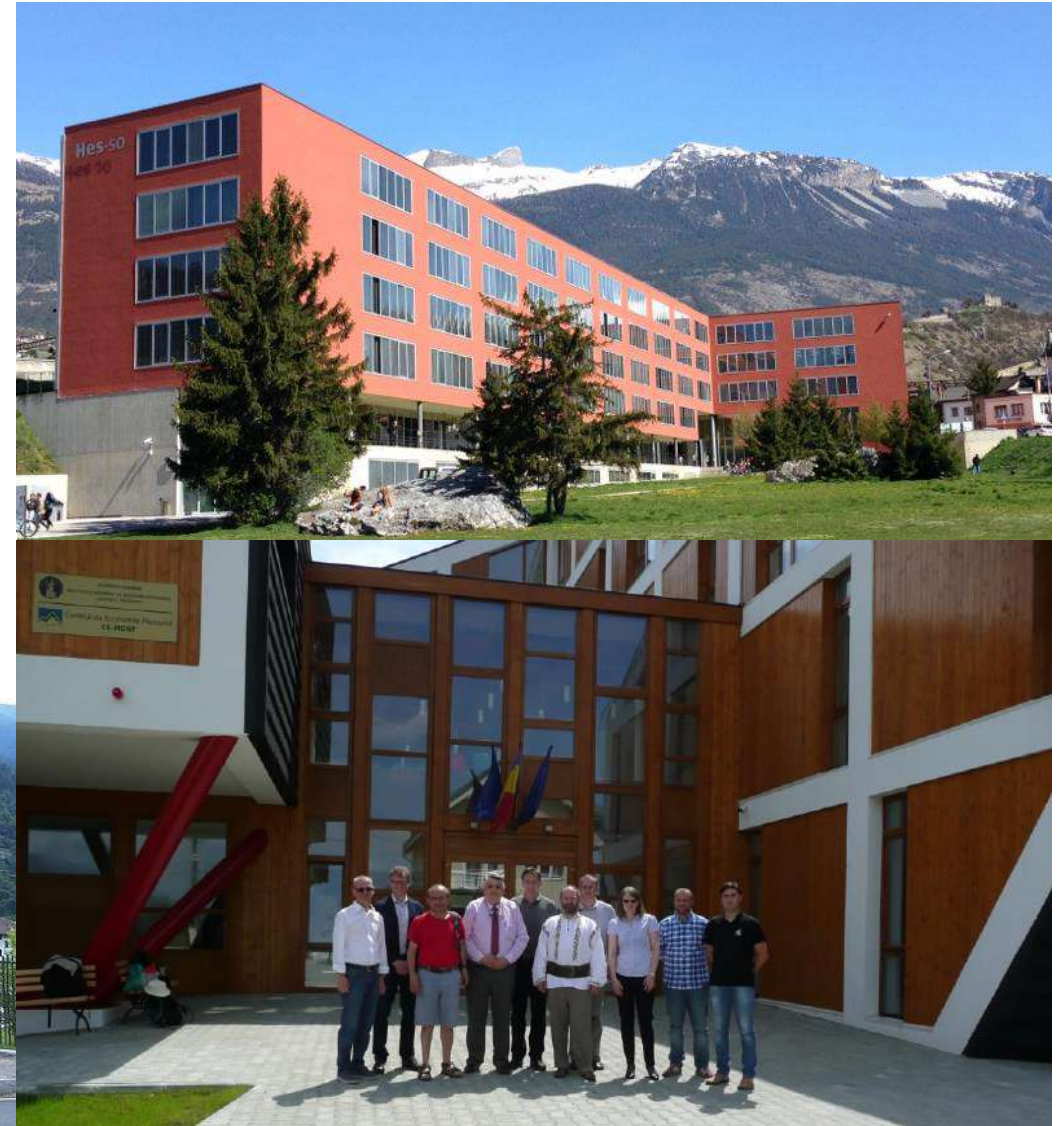


<https://rrb23.rencontresromandesdubois.ch>



Towards a knowledge based mountain economy

Encourage research centers in mountain areas, connect them and make them “accessible” for students and scholars all over Europe.



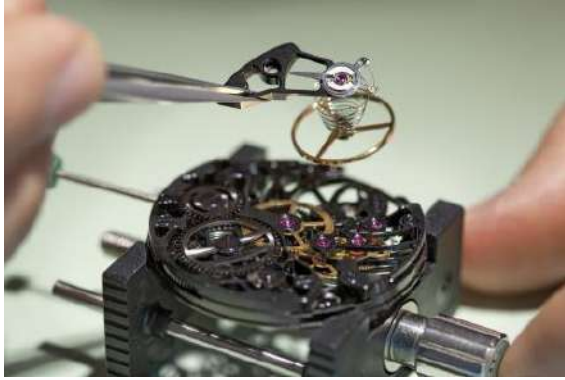
Towards a knowledge based mountain economy



Transformation of mountain economies – but always based on local resources.



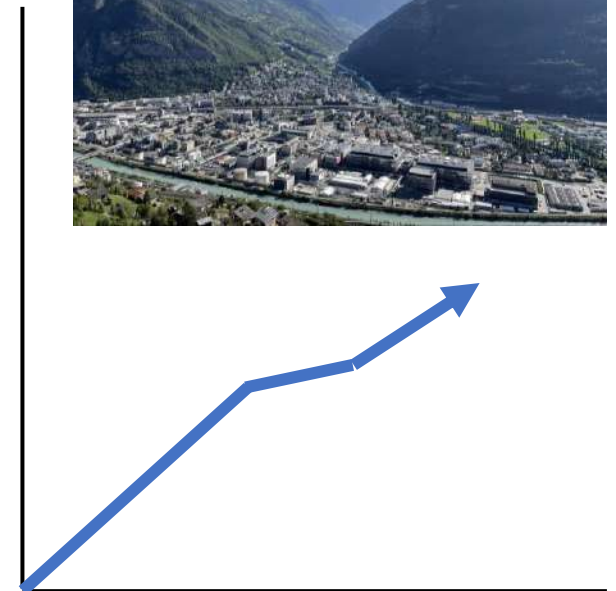
Transformation of mountain economy



„Path dependency“
e.g. watch making industry
in Jura mountains



„Disruptive evolution“
e.g. Andermatt



„Constant evolution“
e.g. Lonza in Visp



Vibrant mountain economies full of Start-ups

There are plenty of highly innovative start-ups in our mountain areas.

They pave the way for the future.

Let's tell their story, change the perception of mountain areas and "Scale-up".



Key findings for mountain policies

- Place based approach
- Implementation of the quadruple helix approach
- Encourage innovation
- Mountain societies need to be open minded to new approaches
- Rural (mountain) proofing of policies at all levels
- Strong cooperation across mountain areas (Euromontana, macroregional strategies, Interreg, Alpine and Carpathian Convention etc.)



Gràcies
Gracias
Thank you
Merci

