

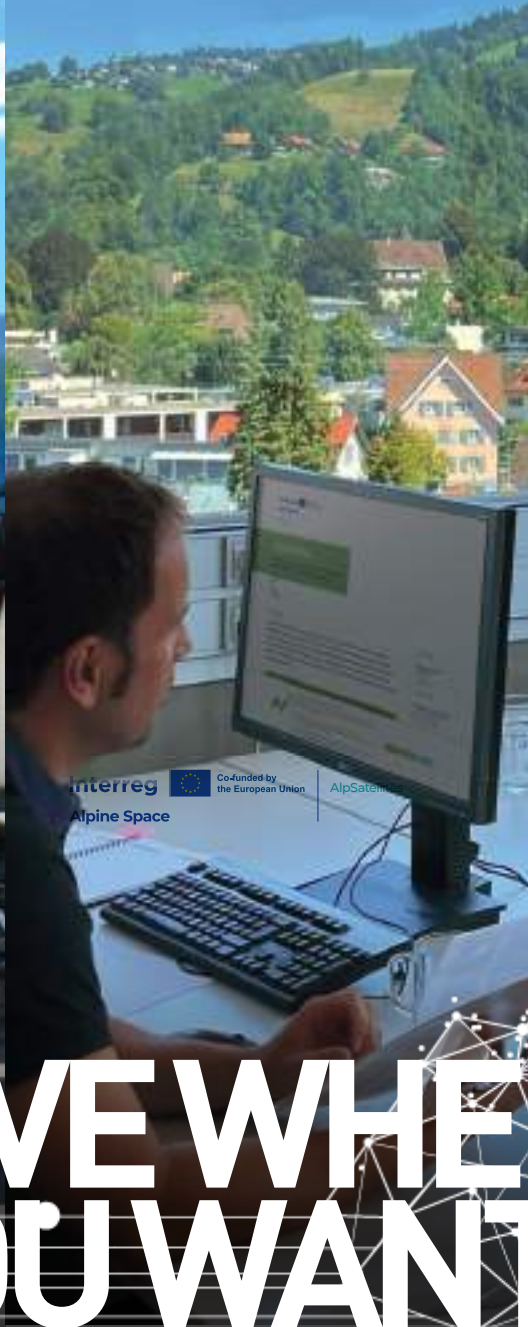
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AlpSatellites

Alpine Space



# LIVE WHEREVER YOU WANT AND WORK WHERE YOU'RE LIVING



## NEWSLETTER

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## Deliverable 1.2.1

# Remote work in the Alps: readiness, opportunities, and barriers

The AlpSatellites project, led by the University of Valle d'Aosta, has been diligently assessing the readiness of its target territories. Within each of the participating countries (Austria, France and Italy), an exhaustive study was conducted to gauge the level of preparedness for remote work in the three focal mountain areas, which encompass the Unité des Communes Valdôtaines Evançon (Valle d'Aosta, Italy), the Pays du Grand Briançonnais, des Écrins, and du Guillestrois/Queyras (France) and the Municipality of Doren (Austria).

The specific objectives of this activity were as follows:

- **Theoretical Framework:** to formulate a theoretical framework that will inform the development of the AlpSatellites project.
- **Characteristics Mapping:** to create an encompassing map of the unique traits of the three targeted areas. These ones include demographic insights, economic indicators, labor market dynamics, technological infrastructure, geographical features, climate data, co-working potential, services

availability, housing market dynamics, public laws, HR policies, demand and supply aspects, job profiles, digitization, digital skills, and tourist appeal.

- **Needs Analysis:** to delve into the needs related to remote work and co-working spaces for the local community, employers, and employees. This analysis also aims to identify the key attributes that AlpSatellites spaces should possess.
- **Barriers and Opportunities:** to identify both the obstacles and opportunities associated with remote work and co-working spaces within the AlpSatellites project.

The research methodology was collaboratively designed by the University of Valle d'Aosta, the University of Applied Science Voralberg (Fachhochschule Vorarlberg - FHV) and the Université Aix-Marseille.

Although the research was a collective effort, each participating university tailored it to meet the necessities of their respective re-

gions.

The research process began with an interdisciplinary literature review, delving into the realms of remote work and co-working spaces. This literature review transcended disciplinary boundaries, involving insights from various fields such as psychology, sociology, anthropology, geography, economics, and science and technology studies. Such a multidisciplinary approach was essential in comprehending the intricacies of the readiness for remote work in these target areas, which have distinctive psychological, social, cultural, geographical, and legislative dimensions.

The research, as presented in the subsequent pages, serves to provide an in-depth understanding of the development of remote work and the creation of co-working spaces that harmonize with the local culture and the specific attributes of the three target areas under examination. It unravels the complexities of remote work, examining not only its micro aspects but also macro elements, acknowledging the interconnectedness of the psycho-





logical, social, cultural, geographical, and legislative dimensions.

Conclusively, the research synthesizes the key factors for action and intervention that will guide the development of remote work and co-working spaces within the Alps.

### Expected Characteristics of Co-working Spaces:

- **Technology Infrastructure:** ensuring high-speed and dependable internet connectivity, complemented by essential tools like printers, scanners, and projectors.
- **Architecture and Design:** employing well-thought-out, sustainable design that maximizes natural light and provides an inviting atmosphere.
- **Strategic Location:** opting for a convenient and easily accessible location, preferably close to public transportation, to attract a broad spectrum of co-working enthusiasts.
- **Diversity of Spaces:** Offering a variety of spaces, including private offices, shared workstations, soundproof meeting rooms, and relaxation areas to cater to diverse needs.
- **Services and Amenities:** providing supplementary services like cafeterias, break areas, reception services, and administrative assistance.
- **Community and Networking:** encouraging interaction among members and creating networking opportunities through events, workshops, seminars, and common interest groups.
- **Contractual Flexibility:** Offering flexible contract options, such as

short-term contracts and monthly subscription plans.

- **Sustainability:** Demonstrating commitment to environmental sustainability, including recycling and using eco-friendly materials.
- **Marketing and Promotion:** implementing a robust marketing strategy and establishing an effective online presence.
- **Efficient Management:** ensuring professional and efficient management of the co-working space.

### Barriers to Settlement:

- **Housing Market:** challenges concerning the availability and affordability of housing.
- **Aging and Difficult-to-Renovate Houses:** obstacles presented by old and challenging-to-renovate houses.
- **Connectivity Issues:** limited access to high-speed internet.
- **Climate Change:** the effects of climate change, including global warming and reduced snowfall.
- **Lack of Services and Facilities:** limited access to essential services and facilities.
- **Limited Cultural Offerings:** the absence of cultural attractions, communal meeting spaces, and opportunities for social interaction.
- **Inadequate Public Transport Network:** the absence of a comprehensive public transportation system.
- **Road Safety Concerns:** safety issues on the roads that discourage settlement.
- **Labor Market:** dominated by low-skilled job opportunities.

- **Rigid Employment Contracts:** employment contracts that may not be flexible enough to accommodate remote workers' needs.

### Facilitators of Remote Work and Co-working Spaces:

- **Improved Connectivity:** investment in broadband infrastructure and the expansion of high-speed internet coverage.
- **Management by Objectives:** promoting a result-oriented organizational culture.
- **Affordable Housing Initiatives:** encouraging the development of affordable housing options.
- **Community Building:** fostering a sense of community and inclusivity to facilitate social integration.
- **Promotion of Co-working Spaces:** actively marketing and promoting co-working spaces as viable work options.
- **Public-Private Alliances:** forming collaborative alliances between public and private organizations to finance co-working spaces.

To sum up, the journey ahead involves addressing the barriers, capitalizing on the advantages, and harnessing the facilitators of remote work and co-working spaces. This approach aims to not only elevate the quality of life for current residents but also to attract and retain a diverse and skilled workforce, thereby contributing to the sustainable development of these regions. As the AlpSatellites project approaches its conclusion, the research findings will be transformed into actionable guidelines, which will be provided to decision-makers for the realization.

## AlpSatellites workshops

The AlpSatellites project, aimed at verifying the potential of remote working in alpine and rural areas, is moving forward. At the end of the phase of the quantitative research with stakeholders, researchers analyzed the findings about the dynamic world of remote working and its ideal co-working settings. After these parts, the project focused on devising solutions able to help the development of remote working in rural mountain areas.

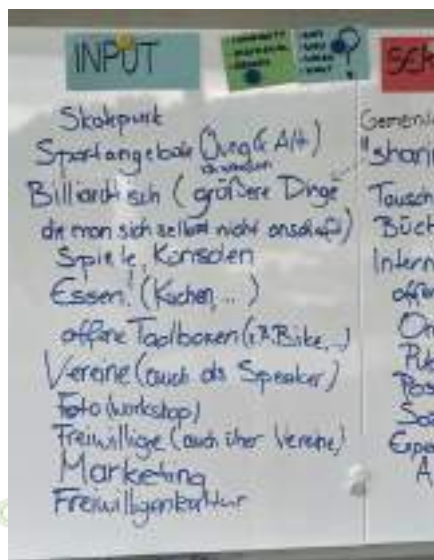
**Austrian partners** held a workshop with entrepreneurs, students, regional and local institutions in the middle of July. What made this gathering truly special was the dynamic participation of young people and students who have taken part on this journey since the beginning. The workshop dove deep into the realm of successful community spaces, coworking initiatives, and more, and the insights were nothing short of enlightening. The resounding theme was the high demand for services and new activities in the municipality, coupled with a strong emphasis on

flexibility and freedom.

The enthusiasm for independently available services was clear and the workshop was a treasure trove of fresh perspectives and innovative ideas. On September 22, elected representatives and socio-professionals from the **Grand Briançonnais region** converged in l'Argentière-la-Bessée. This was a vital moment to check in on the progress of the Alpsatellites project and to take part in the conception of solutions to develop remote working in rural mountain areas. This third phase of the project enabled the participants to propose a number of solutions for the regions, whether in terms of mobility, access to local services, housing, improving reception policies or developing a range of jobs that take account of teleworking.

To investigate the feasibility of the project and find solutions the **Italian partners** organised a workshop on October 30th. From the workshop emerged that, in the Unité des Communes valdôtaines Evançon area, there are many loca-

tions already available that could be exploited as co-working spaces, with the only requirement being to find the necessary funds to fix them up. It also emerged that flexibility in booking is crucial, allowing professionals to access these spaces through codes with hourly payment. Extra services (digital support for a few hours a day or baby-sitting services for mothers who wish to return to work but need care for their children) would be welcome. The success of these spaces depends on their target audience. If aimed at young people, prices should be affordable, whereas if aimed at professionals looking for a well-equipped office, prices may be higher. To ensure success, it is essential to consider the sustainability of the project. Costs will vary greatly depending on location, with ready-made libraries requiring less investment than buildings to be renovated. Public-private partnerships are an ideal model: the public sector can finance the infrastructure, while the private sector can run the business profitably.



## AlpSatellites at the Eusalps meeting

In the wonderful scenario of Skyway at Courmayeur, on October 5-6 the Digital Alps Conference has taken place, an event organized every year by Action Group 5 (AG5) of EUSALP in a different Alpine region. In the year 2023, the Conference was focused on the themes of Smart Communities, data and artificial intelligence, remote working and digital skills, and energy transition supported by digitalization.

The University of Valle d'Aosta participated presenting its ongoing research projects on these topics, and particularly the Alp Satellites project, focused on REMOTE WORKING AND DIGITAL SKILLS FOR NEW MOUNTAIN JOBS.

Mariagrazia Monaci and Angelo Benozzo, project leader and scientific manager of the project, presented the results of the first three phases of the project, related to the Engagement and consultation of local communities, the Analysis of the readiness level for remote working, and the Local and transnational co-design of remote working solutions. Particular attention was



devoted to the comparison of the different necessities underlined in the three rural territories of the three countries involved in the project (Italy, France, Austria). To create new coworking spaces in mountain areas, the most relevant aspects that need to be improved are connectivity, public transports and car sharing, digital support and education, a housing policy to contrast depopulation, and to attract new inhabitants.

## AlpSatellites TPM in Austria

The AlpSatellites project is on the verge with its third Transnational Project Meeting (TPM), scheduled from November 6th to 8th, 2023, in Vorarlberg, Austria. This gathering will bring together key stakeholders, experts, and project partners to discuss and advance the project's objectives. The TPM is a crucial platform for collaborative exploration, discussion, and planning, reaffirming the project's commitment to fostering innovative solutions in remote Alpine regions.

On November 7th, the project will host a public event to provide a broader audience with valuable insights into the project's goals and progress. The event will commence with welcoming remarks from key stakeholders and an exploration

of the Coworking Space and Community Area, emphasizing the role of coworking in building local communities.

Discussions will highlight how coworking spaces can go beyond workstations, fostering a sense of community and collaboration among diverse professionals. The event will also spotlight initiatives aimed at strengthening the local community and the positive impact of AlpSatellites.

The morning session will conclude with a question-and-answer segment, allowing participants to engage with experts and project leaders. In the afternoon, research results and developed solutions within the AlpSatellites project will be shared and discussed.

The final day of the TPM will focus on critical aspects of the project, including the development of Deliverable 1.4.2 and discussions about the changing regulatory framework. Stakeholders will receive a recap of planned activities, deadlines, and insights into financial management and best practices.

The 3rd Transnational Project Meeting serves as a platform for productive discussions and collaboration among project partners and stakeholders, propelling the AlpSatellites project closer to its goal of finding innovative solutions for remote Alpine regions. The engagement and commitment displayed during this meeting reinforce the project's dedication to creating positive change in these remote areas.



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