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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Short description of administrative system in Italy

The Italian Republic is divided into 20 regions, 15 of which are constitutionally granted ordinary status, and 5 of which have special status (Valle d’Aosta/Vallée d’Aoste; Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Sicily and Sardinia), i.e. enjoy a far broader degree of autonomy because of particular historical, geographical and linguistic reasons (Constitution of the Italian Republic). Lombardy, that hosts 1/6 of the population of Italy (about 10 million inhabitants), is one of the Regions having been granted ordinary status.

Ordinary status regions enjoy competences on those matters “that are not exclusively pertaining to the State”, as specified in article 117 of the Constitution. Matters that are exclusively pertaining to the State are those related to civil and criminal law, public order and security, tax laws, general laws concerning education and environmental and cultural heritage protection, immigration and asylum laws, budgetary laws and general laws concerning markets, fundamental laws concerning social care. Ordinary status regions have also shared competences with the State on the matters of health care, transports, scientific and technological research, food safety, labour market, foreign trade, energy production and distribution, and communication networks. On shared competences, the State has the right to determine fundamental principles and framework laws, whereas the Regions can determine local details of their implementation. Exclusive competences of ordinary status regions are professional education, social care, trade laws (excluding foreign trade), industry/entrepreneurship, hunting and fisheries, local police, tourism.

From an administrative point of view, Lombardy is divided in 12 “wide area entities”, namely 11 Provinces (Varese, Como, Sondrio, Pavia, Lodi, Lecco, Monza e Brianza,
Bergamo, Brescia, Cremona, Mantova) and 1 Metropolitan Area (Milano), 1530 Municipalities (or “comuni”; singular: “comune”), and 23 Mountain Communities. Competences of the provinces have been progressively decreased and, following the latest reform of 2014 (NL 56/2014), now encompass provincial transport services in agreement with regional laws, environmental protection at provincial level, education planning including school infrastructures, anti-discrimination laws, and residual strategic territorial planning for mountain provinces.

The Constitutional Reform proposed by the last government, which could have had remarkable consequences on the re-allocation of competences to all administrative levels, was rejected by a referendum that took place in December 2016.

Mountain Communities (LR MC, website) are local authorities with a strong territorial connotation, established by national law and with specific regulation (LD 267/2000). They are defined as unions of municipalities, both mountainous and partially mountainous, with particular characteristics: they often refer to homogeneous areas coinciding with natural river basins, even belonging to different provinces. Mountain Communities’ main objectives are the development and enhancement of mountainous areas, and the exercise of specific functions, delegated functions, and also the associated exercise of municipal functions. In particular Mountain Communities have own or delegate functions on the following items: socio-economic programming, territorial-urban planning, agriculture, public transports, protected areas, civil protection, local police.
Mountain Communities in Lombardy were originally 30, and are now down to 23 following a reorganization operated in 2008 (RL 19/2008). When the national funds for Mountain Communities were discontinued, Regione Lombardia provided a dedicated fund (9.3M€ per year for 2011-2013), to be allocated by means of a negotiated planning tool called “PISL (Local Development Integrated Programmes) of the Mountain”. The 23 PISL were approved in 2012, but they have been defunded and are presently not financed.

1.2. Institutional structures of Lombardy TA (Valchiavenna)

The Valchiavenna Mountain Community is located in the North of Lombardy, and it borders the Swiss canton of Graubünden/Grigioni on three sides: the Mountain Community is an important location for transboundary traffic and trade, due also in particular to its proximities to the important mountain passes of Spluga and Maloja (see figure 3).

The six municipalities that form the Test Area (TA) are all part of the Valchiavenna Mountain Community, composed of a total of twelve municipalities. In particular, the TA includes the territories of Bregaglia valley (municipalities of Piuro and Villa di Chiavenna) and Spluga (or San Giacomo) valley (municipalities of San Giacomo Filippo, Campodolcino, Madesimo), plus the nearby municipality of Chiavenna, which is the most populated comune in Valchiavenna (7,374 inhabitants in 2015 out of a total of 12,222 for the six TA municipalities combined).

The demographic trend of the last 20 years shows a slow decline especially in the less populated municipalities. However, this territory has a strong tourism vocation, mainly linked to the well-known ski area based in Madesimo and Campodolcino.

Figure 3: Lombardy, Valchiavenna and the test area: administrative divisions and morphology.
Valchiavenna Mountain Community is included in the administrative boundaries of the Province of Sondrio, which, together with other two provinces in Italy, was granted some special forms of administrative autonomy by the above mentioned national reform (NL 56/2014), thanks to the peculiarity of being a mountainous area neighbouring with another country (Switzerland).

In 2014 Lombardy identified Valchiavenna as an "inner area" (see paragraph 2.1) and in 2016 approved a “Convention Scheme for the implementation of the Valchiavenna Inner Area project” (LR Inner Areas, website), which includes the Strategy “Valchiavenna 2020”, aimed at: increasing the quality of life, with a particular “family friendly” focus, improving the accessibility to services (in particular education and healthcare); overcoming the seasonal tourism logic towards more sustainable forms; making the local public administration more efficient thanks to an increased accessibility and use of ICT (ATC VAS, website). The intervention plan will make use of ESF, EARDF and ERDF funds, together with State funds, for a total of 19.5 M€.

The main providers of services of general interest (SGI) in the TA, which are detailed in the TA profiles (WPT2), can be summarised as follows:

- **Basic goods**: small retailers or markets provide basic goods for everyday needs.
- **Transport**: public transport service is provided in all municipalities by STPS, a company almost entirely owned by public administrations¹, and by the Swiss Autopostale. There are two national roads (SS36 and SS37) respectively going through Val Bregaglia and Valle Spluga, both connecting Chiavenna with Switzerland and managed by ANAS. Chiavenna is connected to the rest of region through one road only (SS36) and through the regional train service operated by Trenord on a single-track railway, both leading to Colico (on the northern shore of Lake Como), which is connected to Milano.
- **Telecommunication**: TIM and other operators provide the landline and mobile phone services. Valchiavenna meets the definition of “white area”, where public intervention is needed to ensure coverage of ultra-broadband (see pag.14).
- **Health and social care**: in Valchiavenna services are provided by the public system through the regional ATS-Montagna (Mountain's Health Protection Agency), which heads the ASST (Territorial Social Care and Health Units) Valtellina and Alto Lario. At local level the main services are provided by the Hospital of Chiavenna.
- **Education**: in the TA, public institutions provide the mandatory education services through two main comprehensive institutes. A further public institute provides high school level education, in humanistic, scientific and technical fields.

¹ Province of Sondrio, Mountain Communities of Valtellina and Valchiavenna, municipalities of Valtellina.
2. **ACTUAL STRATEGIES on SGI**

2.1. **Basic report on the strategies**

As regards the regional/local development, mountains are explicitly indicated among the priorities of Lombardy's current Regional Development Programme (RDP, 2013), which states that the Region intends to develop a unified strategy that covers all of the mountain peculiar issues, by implementing coordinated and interdisciplinary actions able to put together the different stakeholders. In order to do that, the Region will build on the positive experiences of policies and tools such as the Territorial Area Plans (implementing the Territorial Regional Plan, developed also in mountain areas such as Valtellina, Orobie Bergamasche e Valsassina) and the Local Development Integrated Programmes of the Mountain – PISL, developed for the 23 Mountain Communities.

Over the past decade, some of the policies of Regione Lombardia have addressed in various ways the issues related to mountain areas and small municipalities:

- Regional actions supporting population living in mountain areas (*RL 25/2007*): establishment of a specific regional fund to support mountain areas development. Mountain Communities are the main actors to plan and to support the local development through specific plans, like the aforementioned and no more financed PISL.
- Regional funds supporting Lombardy's small municipalities (*RL 11/2004*): strategies and interventions in support of small and remote Lombardy municipalities (<2,000 inhabitants) to avoid depopulation. The law fosters innovative models for SGI provision in remote municipalities.
- Reorganization and legislation for Lombardy's Mountain Communities and Municipalities Unions (*RL 19/2008*). The law encourages the associated provision of public services in order to maintain high level of performance and an efficient and dynamic management system. Municipalities belonging to Mountain Communities can share the provision and the costs of SGI within their territories.
- Regional law for re-organization of local institutions and their competences, and rules for the definition of mountain territories specificity (*RL 19/2015*). The law establishes institutional working groups in each province, in order to test and compare performances of local public services provision in different territories. The aim of this comparison is to reach the most efficient and effective level of shared management of institutional functions and public services, especially for remote areas that could take advantage from associated management models.
A relevant document is also the National Strategy for Inner Areas (SIA, 2014), adopted in the Partnership Agreement 2014-2020 with the European Commission. Inner areas are defined as areas characterized by geographical isolation, demographic decline and low levels in essential services (such as transport, health, education). The strategy aims at reversing the depopulation and marginalisation trends in such areas, focusing on two key economic policy assets: improving personal services (which are seen as "pre-conditions for development") and triggering local development projects. This will be done by both ordinary and EU funds. Inner areas have to be identified by the Regions. In Lombardy the first two areas (Valchiavenna and Valtellina) have completed the definition of their local development strategies, and two more areas (Oltrepo Pavese e Alto Lario-Valsassina) are in the process of being assisted in drafting theirs.

Acknowledging the importance of the tourism sector as an engine for sustainable local development, Priority axis VI - Tourism Strategy for Inner Areas of the ERDF 2014-2020 Lombardy's ROP (funds allocated: 19M€, 1.96% of total ROP resources) provides Lombardy's Inner Areas with the tools for redefining their tourist offer, both in terms of infrastructures and in terms of organizational measures (promotional services, etc.). Another 19M€ of additional funding will contribute to this strategy, from reserves on Priority axes I, III and IV, plus 15M€ from the ESF ROP (ERDF ROP, 2015).

As regards basic goods, the relevant regional law (RL 6/2010) for trade and fair sectorial development introduces, among other aspects, specific legislative regulations dedicated to mountain municipalities to foster the integration between private and public intervention in trade sectors, and establishes special rules for street markets in mountain territories.

As regards transport, the main policy document is the regional law for the transport sector (RL 6/2012), which determines the establishment of 6 territorial Agencies (Bergamo, Brescia, Cremona-Mantova, Como-Lecco-Varese, Sondrio, Milano-Monza-Lodi-Pavia), in charge of programming, organizing, monitoring and supporting integrated mobility services in their own area. The recently approved Mobility and Transport Regional Programme (MTRP, 2016) provides an updated representation of the infrastructural and service interventions that are planned for the short, medium and long term at the regional scale, aiming at an integrated planning of the different modes (rail, road, water, bike transport).

As regards telecommunication, two national strategies represent the Italian roadmap for the achievement of EU Digital Agenda goals by 2020: the Ultra Broadband Strategy (UBS, 2015) on the infrastructure side, and the Digital Growth Strategy (DGS, 2015) on the demand/services side. At regional level, the Lombardy Digital Agenda (LDA, 2014) defines the priorities to make the most of the newest technologies and to create added value to citizens and enterprises (in terms of digital competences, interoperability of networks and services, public information sharing, digital citizenship, ICT for the enterprises).
In agreement with the EU guidelines for the development of broadband networks, in April 2016 Regione Lombardia and the national Ministry for Economic Development signed an agreement for the development of the network by public initiative, in order to reduce the digital divide in the “white areas” (or market failure areas). The general aim is to obtain an extension of the coverage, in order to grant to 100% of Lombardy’s population a service of 30 Mbps, and to 85% of Lombardy’s population a service of 100 Mbps. The works, that will involve all municipalities of Lombardy, are expected to be completed in 2020. The total public investment is 450M€, of which 380M€ come from national resources and 70M€ from ERDF and EAFRD allocated by the Region (LR UBFA, website).

In fact, priority axis II (Enhancing access, use and quality of ICT) of the ERDF 2014-2020 Lombardy’s ROP (allocated funds: 20M€, 2.06% of total ROP resources) aims at reducing the digital divide supporting the implementation of the national strategy and other interventions in particular in business districts, industrial areas, rural areas and inner areas, respecting the principle of technological neutrality wherever EU regulations permit (ERDF ROP, 2015). In addition, Objective 7 (Essential services for rural areas) of the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 funds new or improved ICT services/infrastructures for rural population (RDP, 2015).

Another investment (40M€ ERDF), which can be implemented in synergy with the ultra-broad band one, concerns the adoption of technological solutions for decreasing the energy consumed by public lighting, promoting the installation of LED lights with automatic regulation systems, possibly with integrated smart services (parking management, safety cameras, rechargers, etc.).

A further national law (LD 33/2016) has also to be cited, as it foresees the reduction of costs for the installation of high-speed electronic communication networks.

In terms of health and social care, the delivery of these services represents by far the highest cost in the regional budget. As stressed by the regional law (RL 23/2015), the Lombardy health and welfare system is designed with the aim of a complete integration between social and health services. Private and public entities, directly or indirectly involved in the delivery of SSGI, are expected to elaborate innovative models for integration of different services in the health and social care fields. Other significant documents are:

- the regional guidelines for chronic diseases and fragile conditions (chronic diseases account for more than 70% of health spending in Lombardy), which foster the use of innovative technologies for the implementation of new models for the delivery of SGI, also in remote areas (RGCD, 2015);
- the regional plan for disease prevention, which proposes a multi-sectoral approach at the regional scale to prevent health problems for all ages, social classes and jobs (RPP, 2015).

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2 Defined according to the EU Guidelines for the application of State aid rules (EU, 2013) and according to EC-approved state aid for intervention on ultrabroad band.
The reform of the welfare system in Lombardy includes the test action plan called "Self-sufficiency income", which includes five actions for families with lower income, vulnerable (disabled and elderly), and unemployed citizens (SSAP, 2015).

As regards education it is important to mention, with reference to the regional competences, the regional law on Quality, innovation and internationalization in education, training and employment systems (RL 30/2015), which aims at aligning higher education services with the needs and opportunities of the region and its SMEs. Closer collaboration between regional and local governments, private sector and tertiary education institutions is set to become a model for the regional higher educational system.

It is noteworthy to cite also the recent regional law on research and innovation (RL 29/2016), whose aim is to shape a unitary framework for regional R&I policies and to harmonize the related measures. The main objectives of the law are:

- to strengthen the regional investments in R&I, to support the competitiveness of the economic system, the human capital growth, to enhance the social wellbeing and the quality of the services for companies and citizens;
- to spread the culture for “responsible research and innovation” by disseminating knowledge optimizing the production capacities of traditional sectors’ companies;
- to highlight the importance of technology transfer process, and the creation of value through innovation and to push on instruments to facilitate these processes;
- to develop and integrate private research and the public one;
- to support the identification and development of strategic emerging sectors;
- digital infrastructure security and investments for open data and big data.

The Region reinforces its policies on research, innovation, technology transfer and advanced training, in synergy with public and private entities such as: universities and research institutes, Lombardy technology clusters, technology parks and districts, companies and associations.

2.2. General problems, related to the delivery of SGI

Please note that in this chapter and in the following, which are mainly based on the interviews performed in September 2016 (see Appendix 2), the sector of telecommunication will be particularly detailed because, together with representing a SGI per se, ICT can be deemed a pervasive tool enabling the integration of other services. It should also be noted that Lombardy's pilot action in the TA will focus specifically on ICT.

In general, accessibility to the SGI, which was the focus of the Alpine Space Project ACCESS (ACCESS, website), was the main problem mentioned during the interviews, concerning two sides.
• On one hand, the location of the services (the national spending review has led to the reduction of the number of hospitals and schools due to merging, with the result of often depriving mountain areas of such services). As regards health care, a general problem of access to hospitals was identified, both in terms of scarce prevention and difficult access to far away hospitals, and in terms of too much hospitalization rate in avoidable cases. As per education, the limited amount of pupils in mountain areas is mirrored by a high degree of school migrations towards more urban areas. Locally, some multi-age classes have been experimented in order to maintain local school populations.

• On the other hand, the transport connections (issues regarding availability, frequencies and time tables, and also regarding traffic in valley bottoms, that can cause long delays in the journeys from, e.g., house to school).

As per Lombardy's focus on telecommunication, some more specific problems can be listed as follows.

• Low connectivity (e.g. lack of a reliable internet connection) and consequent lack of usability of ICT services in mountain areas, even though some strategies are in place to improve the situation.

• Need for specific technological solutions that fit both the morphology and the demographics, e.g. optic fibre is unfit to serve the sparse communities in the mountains, and can be complemented by wireless systems.

• Perceived mistrust of local communities with respect to technological innovation, especially in terms of perceived redundancy and/or financial unsustainability, although in the context of an improving situation. To this end, also some instances of local conservatism and inertia have been identified.

• Lack of competences in ICT use in local areas/public administrations/local service providers from other general sectors.

• In terms of cooperation for technological purposes (e.g. data gathering), often big public institutions (railways, motorways, road management) are slow and bureaucratic in their approach.

• Complicated framework of rules: the bureaucracy is complex, and the number of rules and documents needed to both provide and access services is a severe hindrance for the non-expert citizen/enterprise.

2.3. Identified gaps

Gaps mentioned by the interviewees as regards the existing strategies in relation to the delivery of the SGI concern: regulations and finances, the role/action of local administrations and communities, the role/action of central/regional administrations. The following gaps are to be considered as perceptions and considerations from the specific subset of interviewees selected for our analysis, and not as a thorough quantitative evaluation of the gaps in the existing strategies in relation to the delivery of the SGI in Lombardy.
In this sense, as regards local development, the most significant gaps mentioned are the following:

- **overcomplicated, ever evolving and often redundant institutional framework**, with continuous changes in laws and law proposals regarding, in particular, the competences of the soon-to-be dismissed provinces to be re-allocated to the Municipalities, the Unions of municipalities, the Mountain Communities, the Regions and the State;
- **lack of reliable finances/financial means for the mountains** (municipalities, mountain communities); even though the mountain are specifically mentioned in Lombardy’s current Regional Development Programme (*RDP, 2013*), some interviewees underlined that instruments dedicated to the mountains, such as the above mentioned PISL are currently defunded;
- some of the regional policies do not have an explicit territorial approach and therefore do not treat the mountains as a specific territory; this, although understandable from a policy point of view, is sometimes a gap in terms of territorial focus;
- **problem of effectiveness of mountain strategies**, often compounded by lack of planning capacities at local level; weakening of some local competencies (especially in the roles of public officials), risk of personalization of choices in low-populated areas.

Further interesting and shared general remarks concern the need of a better **knowledge** of local territories and a better **dialogue** between mountain areas and urban areas, from a planning, legislative, and strategic point of view: mountain actors/stakeholders may not trust the approach of urban areas (in Lombardy, Milan) and may have a mistrust for policies and strategies they deem as “imposed” from above without an actual knowledge of local specificities.

Some more specific gaps identified for telecommunication can be summarized as follows:

- In terms of **policies and public bids for ICT services**, it could be advisable to have public bids targeted specifically at mountain/rural areas, and not just at a wider regional context.
- it would be advisable for public administration, in their preparation of tenders through public consultation, to take into account more of the hints and inputs arising from private entities expert on specific ICT matters.
- some of the problems identified are related to the **obsolescence of regulations**, with particular respect to ICT “minimum level of services”. A discussion on the redefinition of the minimum level of services is ongoing both at European and at national levels: some of the details being re-defined are minimum bandwidth, use of wi-fi spots, band speed.\(^3\)

\(^3\) In addition to minimal services, Telecom provides, after consulting Regions, Municipalities and their Associations, with “Piani Autonomi di Copertura” “Coverage Autonomous/Ad Hoc Plans”: these plans are
tailored service plans for specific areas, that are often characterised by low population or a particular orography. This often specifically applies to mountain areas, and/or to areas that are characterised by digital divide. Specific (and longer) investment payback times are foreseen for these areas (that is, the payback is expected over longer times). To this end, Regions (and namely Lombardy) have often anticipated the State in publishing Bids for Services, especially related to overcoming the digital divide (2007-2013 ERDF ROP Lombardy) -> following this bid (and its adjudication), Lombardy is now covered (99.7% of the territory) with a bandwidth of max 20 Mb.
2.4. **Existing plans, trends**

As mentioned in the introduction, the Italian institutional framework has been in a moment of possible change. At the national level, in fact, it is relevant to mention that the competences and administrative structure depicted in chapter 1.1 were subject to a Referendum on a Constitutional Reform, which took place in December 2016. In terms of regional competences, the Constitutional Reform foresaw the abolition of the provinces (with the exception of the Autonomous Provinces) and the consequent acquisition of all provincial competences by the Regions. At the same time, the Reform would have implied the abolition of the competences shared by the State and the ordinary status Regions, which would become exclusive competences of the State. Moreover, even in the matters where the Regions have exclusive competences, the Reform foresaw a “supremacy clause”, according to which the State may have intervened on the regional laws in case of “superior national interest”. The Constitutional Reform was however rejected by a majority of voters.

Several other proposals for the administrative re-allocation of competences are being discussed at the moment both at national and regional levels: among those, i) a special law for small municipalities (CD, website) that has been recently approved by the “Camera dei Deputati” (one of the two chambers of the Italian Parliament) and that addresses the risk of depopulation, the safeguard of natural and cultural heritage, and the provision of essential services (the law will however have to be discussed and finally approved by the Senate); ii) a regional proposal concerning “wide area entities” in Lombardy (LR wide areas, website).

Another relevant initiative at the national level is the draft of a framework law (NL draft/2016) about local services of general economic interest (SGEI). The draft states that municipalities and metropolitan cities, within their competences, consider these services as essential to ensure the satisfaction of the needs of local communities, so as to ensure the homogeneity of the development and social cohesion. SGEI have to be provided on the basis of adequate territorial units (“ambiti o bacini territoriali omogenei”), to be identified by the Regions, after consulting provinces, metropolitan cities and municipalities. The function of organisation and monitoring of SGEI are distinct from the function of management of SGEI. Among other provisions, the SGEI managers are required to publish a “charter of services” on their website and other public platforms.

At the EU level, EUSALP (the EU strategy for the Alpine Region) is also starting its activities and it will prove of extreme interest: EUSALP has instituted 9 working groups, including WG 5 which is specifically dedicated to SGI (led by Valle d’Aosta plus SAB). The first results (mainly in terms of new projects) are expected within one year. The European Commission has also foreseen a stakeholder platform aiming at the involvement of
citizens and interested actors. A fourth Pillar/Objective has been (un)officially added to EUSALP: governance.

As regards telecommunication and ICT infrastructure and services, the interviews highlighted the following:

- a special attention to mountain areas could be provided by the "Piani Autonomi di Copertura, Coverage Autonomous/Ad Hoc Plans";
- the recently closed INFRATEL tender for ultrabroad band will bring by 2020 the ultra-broad band in market failure areas;
- there is a positive trend in the simplification of legislative and bidding procedures, and a more favourable legislation framework. Also, innovative technologies are actively encouraged and funded (for example, mini-digs and the possibility of using existing borehole and wiring infrastructures);
- several EU-cofunded projects (such as PUSEMOR, ACCESS, VETTA, PTA) and regional projects concern provision of services via ICT to mountain areas. VETTA and PTA, in particular, focused on broad-band delivery to the alpeggi (mountain pastures) and shelters and ICT services for safety purposes but also useful for tourism in remote mountain areas.
- a positive trend exists in the acceptance and desirability of technological innovation, where most of the mistrust of the past is being overcome.

3. INTEGRATED APPROACH

3.1. Integration models

In terms of integration, the INTESI partners have agreed on the following definition: a strategy for the provision of SGI based on four main principles (quality, availability, affordability, accessibility) and which takes into account the actual and future needs of the people in a given territory, territorial dimension (inter-municipal) and the benefit of the potential for synergies between the different sectors of SGI.

As regards the services of general interest managed by municipalities, the most promising plan according to the interviews is for the gestione associata, or “shared/associated management”, in which a group of municipalities share responsibilities and resources for service provisions. The gestione associata could also strengthen the competencies which have been weakened.

The gestione associata could become compulsory for municipalities under 5,000 inhabitants, as regards the integration of the general organisation of administration, financial and accountancy management, SGI including transport, cadaster, urban planning, civil protection, waste, social care, local police, school buildings. Such a shared management could, however, be perceived as an external imposition with respect to local spontaneous dynamics.
Mountain communities are a form of “gestione associata”, as one of the functions recognized by national law is to carry out functions delegated/conferred by the municipalities belonging to the Community; this promotes uniformity of standards, efficient resources allocation, and administrative simplification.

As for the specific case of Valchiavenna, for example, the Mountain Community provides and manages, on behalf of all municipalities belonging to this Local Entity, the following services:

- Administrative/financial/technical services and associated management of typical municipal function or services
- Valchiavenna Information System (SI.VALCH) and Geographic Information System (SIT)
- Single Contact Point for Productive Activity (SUAP)
- Cultural services (Library System, Archival Service, Museum Service)
- Social care services (Planning Office, Basic Social Care Service)

In a general context of a lack of an explicit strategy for integration of SGI in Lombardy, there are however several cases of integration between telecommunication and other SGI in the region. Some of the most interesting examples can be found in the following:

- **Provision of health and social-care services**: electronic health records, de-materialization of prescriptions, online bookings and health reports; in particular, it is important to highlight the Carta Regionale dei Servizi (Regional Card for Services, RCS): a multi-function smart card allowing the access to Public Administration services. In particular, on the Regional website for Health Services, the Regional Card allows to download medical reports, to book visits and exams, to gather information on payments and exemptions, to change the GP, to auto-certify exemptions for tax accountancy. The RCS works as national health card, EU card for health insurance, and also as Fiscal Code card. Since 2013, the RCS has been merged with the National Card of Services. ([CRS, website](#))

  Within its Digital Agenda, Lombardy has also recently defined the Guidelines for an electronic social record ([LR ESR, website](#)), thanks to which it will be possible to guarantee the interoperability of communications among all professionals and institutions involved in social care activities, and the integration with national databases.

- **Transports**: in particular, as regards infomobility services, Regione Lombardia has created, with the cooperation of transport managers, Muoversi in Lombardia, a Travel Planner web portal aiming at gathering train, bus, metro (and other) time tables and routes. The Region has also facilitated the adoption of technological standards for the development of electronic ticketing supporting mode and tariff integration on the whole regional territory. Outside Milan metropolitan area, Lombardy has also foreseen a tender aiming to fund the creation of electronic ticketing systems to be integrated with the regional
rail services and to be developed by provincial capitals in order to cover the whole regional territory with interoperable ticketing systems (*MTRP*, 2016).

- **Education**: initiatives for digital teaching and the dissemination of tablets and digital platforms.

As regards the integration between regional and local ICT services, according to an expert being interviewed, the model that could be promoted and established in the nearest future is the “brokerage model”, characterised by a Framework Agreement between Regione Lombardia and local municipalities on the storage of PA documents and invoices, in order to provide a unified a simplified system for all municipalities in Lombardy. Other existing models are the “provision model”, in which RL represents a system integrator (main problems are related to bureaucracy and transparency rules, most namely for in-house entities), the “regulatory model”, in which RL defines priorities, drafts guidelines and standardises processes. Hybrid models are also possible.

Regione Lombardia is also managing E015, the Expo 2015 project for a digital ecosystem that allows for the communication and cooperation among the IT services of public and private actors operating in multiple sectors: transport, hospitality, tourism, culture, etc. ([E015, website](#)). The E015 experience and practices could be extended and replicated in other contexts.

As regards local good practices, some interviewees mentioned that often tourism is the main activity around which integration of services might work. There are several virtuous examples of integration of services dedicated to tourists (for example in Valcamonica, with a dedicated card allowing access to a whole host of services).

There are some experimentations of tele-medicine. For example, the Valchiavenna Area Strategy ([ATC VAS, website](#)) includes the project *Mountain Virtual Hospital (MVH)*, which intends to create an experimental model of Mountain Hospital by making use of innovative services and new technologies, such as tele-medicine, home-based tele-radiology, points of care, de-localised diagnostic treatment-rooms. The MVH should have significant effects on local health provisions, and also interesting effects on tourism. This approach necessitates of innovation and education of the citizens in the use of the services and a proper integration with general practitioners and social services of the municipalities.

### 3.2. Need for integration

A clear wish for the integration of strategies has emerged from all the interviewees. A true integration has to involve institutional and private actors and has to be based on effective structural intervention in terms of strengthening competences at all levels, simplifying and improving the organisational and management structures. Some general considerations can be summarised as follows:
• Mountain areas can have a great capacity of self-organising, depending on the strength of local actors (Mountain Communities, Municipalities, private economical actors, ...). Every mountain area in Lombardy has a different self-organisation, centred on the Mountain Communities or on the main municipality: this capacity in self-organisation can be fundamental to foster local development, but it has to be acknowledged and properly understood by policy and decision makers.

• It is extremely demanding to create local development for the mountains when one considers both the legislative complexities at all levels and the complexities of mountain areas themselves.

• A better governance culture is needed, one that goes beyond the years of a political mandate, and that provides for an actual vertical integration among stakeholders. It would also be important to evaluate the relationship/complementarity of national and regional strategies, using common indicators and monitoring systems for implementation.

• It is also important to facilitate the horizontal integration, at least in terms of political action, with actors such as enterprise associations, chambers of commerce, ...

• It would be important to build synergies among different funding sources.

As regards regional public transport, there is a clear need for a mode and tariff integration (coordination of timetables, park-and-ride, bike-and-ride, bike on the bus). Regional policies foresee for a unitary transport system, that should be able to guarantee the optimization of timetables and frequencies, ensuring reliability and effectiveness of services.

As regards telecommunication, ICTs are a natural candidate as a medium for integration; the need for integration is well perceived and acknowledged. An effective provision of ICT services and an effective integration with SGI would also facilitate tourism, the main revenue activity in Lombardy’s mountain areas, and also smart working routines.

4. CONCLUSIONS, INPUT FOR WPT3

The major problems and gaps, and some preliminary ideas on how to challenge them, that have been identified can be summarised as follows. Once again, such problems and gaps are linked to the personal perceptions and considerations from the specific subset of interviewees chosen in the drafting of the regional report, and cannot be considered as a complete evaluation of the performance of the Region in the provision of Services of General Interest.

• A structured approach to data collection, updating and monitoring with respect to SGI is lacking and should therefore be encouraged. Local inputs on the provision of SGI in mountain areas have to be gathered effectively, taken into account and valued.
There is a lack in clarity and certainty in the institutional framework and, even more so, the present institutional environment, in Italy and therefore in Lombardy, is currently being subject to some changes: it should be paramount to have a transparent framework of competences, laws, and financial means, for SGI, and their possible integration in Lombardy, and in its mountain areas in particular.

A better multi-level governance and participation approach has to be fostered. An effective communication and dialogue between the policy makers at different levels has to be promoted, from the European to the national to the regional and to the local one. A real presence of “the central powers” in mountain territories is needed, as well as an actual engagement and will to listen. The focus should be in what the mountains are asking, and in the embrace of the specificities and the complexities of the mountain areas: mountains should be listened to and understood in their needs and their complexities. Often policy makers have grand “visions” with little knowledge and/or will to listen to local mountain communities. “Learn locally – transfer globally – go back and act locally”.

It is fundamental to foster effective communication and synergy, especially between the regional and local level in Lombardy, encouraging a cross-fertilization of data, inputs and ideas, in order to facilitate and better focus the decision making process regarding the provision of SGI and their possible integration.

At international level, EUSALP could represent an interesting opportunity for integration and for the enhancement in the provision of SGI to mountain areas only if a better governance system and the necessary funds are provided (so far it lacks specifically allocated funding; there is also some confusion in the intersection of competences between EUSALP, the Alpine Convention, Alpine Space and CIPRA).

The need of a shared vocabulary for mountain areas to guarantee effective communication has also been highlighted: at the European level, even the term “mountain” itself is not understood in the same way in different countries.

Awareness of the opportunities and benefits of ICT should be raised, in general and in terms of the potential of ICT to provide for an effective integration of SGI in mountain areas. Some form of mistrust in “new technologies” and their possible benefits and usability for local populations appears to be still rather widespread.

Local competences on ICT have to be strengthened, in particular as regards digital competences, e-inclusion, e-citizenship, and e-leadership (LDA, website). The spread of e-competences is paramount for local professionals, from public servants to GPs, transport managers and technicians, educators, and social care providers.
Integration of SGI is present, in Lombardy, with some good practices and positive experiences, especially with regards to the integration in health services (*Carta Regionale dei Servizi*), in social care (*Linee Guida Cartella Sociale Informatizzata*) and in transport services (*Muoversi in Lombardia*), as described in paragraph 3.1.

At regional level, there is a clear effort to create a robust background for integration activities, encouraging especially the use of ICT as the privileged means to provide for a concrete integration. More efforts are needed for mountain areas, where morphological, demographic and, consequently, market characteristics, still prevent from a factual investment in the integration of the provision of SGI. However, the capacity of local areas to self-organize, and the attention of the Region to the specificities of mountain areas, should be treasured in order to create the adequate background to encourage further SGI integration practices, and to create a more robust and organic policy framework on the integration of SGI.

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6. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Report on the collection of strategies

The overall methodology followed was the one proposed by the WP leader, as regards the identified sectors and the details of the presentation of policies and contents. A chronological order was followed, and we chose to concentrate on the most recent documents, or documents the implementation of which has more direct consequences on the territories. As regards the choice itself of the documents, the selection was facilitated by contacts and discussions with relevant regional actors, who could address us to the documents more specifically related to their sector of interest. The documents themselves are mostly accessible on the web: they are mostly in Italian but in some instances an English translation is available (for example, the Italian constitution is available in several languages on the website of the Presidency of the Republic).

The collection includes documents of different typology, from laws to decrees to agreements to regulations, to policy instruments and guidelines. When possible, we have focused not on general provisions related to the sectors of SGI, but on the contents explicitly concerning or mentioning remote/inner/marginal/mountain areas.

A total of 22 documents have been collected and submitted to the database, distributed among sectors as follows: 4 general, 6 regional development, 1 transport, 5 telecommunications, 2 basic goods, 3 health, 2 social care, 1 education (2 documents have been associated to 2 different sectors).
Appendix 2: Report on carrying out the interviews

Interviews were performed during the month of September 2016. A total of 13 people (12 men and 1 woman) were interviewed, as listed in the box. The average years of experience of the interviewees working in the field was around 20. Most interviews were performed in the offices of the interviewees in the headquarters of Regione Lombardia and regional agencies (7 meetings). Plus 3 phone conferences. One service provider was interviewed at the RL headquarter.

The questions have been personalised for each of the interviewees, starting from the agreed list. The list itself was in fact provided to interviewees by e-mail well in advance with respect to the interview, in order for them to prepare themselves. The interviews have been performed by Regione Lombardia (Cristina Pellegrino) with the technical assistance Poliedra (Alessandra Cappiello and/or Gianluca Lenti). While remarking the kind and thorough helpfulness of all interviewees, it was interesting to notice the perplexity of some with respect to the vastness and complexity of the issues. On average, the interviews lasted around 50 minutes each: interviewers also asked for the possibility of recording the interviews (that was always granted) and took pictures after completing all of the “in person” interviews. Some of the pictures have been included in the following.

DIGITAL ITALY AGENCY (AgID) - Area “Citizens, enterprises and technology transfer” - person in charge

REGIONE LOMBARDIA
- Structure “Bruxelles delegation” - manager, coordinator for the Italian regions in EUSALP
- Structure “Relations with local authorities and reorganization of administrative processes in local autonomies” - manager
- Structure “Programs and projects for the development of mountain areas” - manager plus technical coordinator
- Structure “Simplification and digitalization” - manager
- General Directorate “Environment, Energy and Sustainable Development” – director

REGIONAL AGENCIES/INSTITUTES
- EUPOLIS (Regional Institute for research, statistics and training) - “Institutional arrangements and territorial governance” - executive staff
- ERSAF (Regional Agency for Development of Agriculture and Forestry) - President, plus manager for the OU Services to Territory, Forestry and Mountains, plus technical coordinator of ICT projects
SERVICE PROVIDERS

- **Tim – Telecom Italia S.pA.** (largest telecommunication company in Italy) - manager for relation with institutions
- **Retelit S.p.A.** (data services and telecommunication infrastructure operator) - chief operating officer

![Figure 3 – Some of the interview meetings.](image-url)
Appendix 3: Interview questions in local language

Questionario sulle politiche/strategie in tema di Servizi di Interesse Generale (SIG)

Riconoscizione delle politiche/strategie
- Quali sono i principali documenti di policy che guidano l'erogazione dei SIG in Italia/Lombardia?
- Direbbe che c'è un'influenza, grande o piccola, dell'Unione Europea sull'erogazione dei SIG in Italia/Lombardia e, nello specifico, sui contenuti dei documenti di policy o legislativi?

Erogazione dei SIG, esigenze e lacune
- Secondo lei, la montagna e le aree rurali, considerate le loro caratteristiche geografiche, hanno esigenze specifiche riguardo l'erogazione di SIG? Quali esigenze specifiche indicherebbe, in particolare per il suo settore (specifiche necessità infrastrutturali, caratteristiche geografico-morfologiche, caratteristiche demografico-abitative, ...)? Queste esigenze specifiche sono menzionate esplicitamente nelle politiche del suo settore?
- Pensa che l'erogazione di SIG in Lombardia sia efficiente e soddisfi le necessità della montagna e delle aree rurali, con particolare riferimento al suo settore? Se sì, quali sono le ragioni principali? Se no, quali problemi sottolineerebbe (lacune nell'erogazione di SIG? lacune nella conoscenza del territorio, nel coinvolgimento degli attori, nella presenza di politiche/strategie, nella disponibilità di fondi, nella comunicazione...)?
- Quali sono i modelli più comuni nell'erogazione di SIG (erogazione da autorità pubblica, concessioni, partenariati pubblico-privato, cooperazione, ...) supportati dalla strategia/dalle policy del suo settore? Sono gli stessi da molto tempo? Stanno funzionando? Se no, quali sono le lacune principali nel loro funzionamento? E quali sono, a suo parere, le ragioni di queste lacune?
- Quali sono i principali stakeholder coinvolti nella preparazione e nell'implementazione di queste policy legate all'erogazione dei SIG?
- Secondo la sua esperienza, tutti gli attori coinvolti (ministeri, livello regionale, erogatori di SIG/service providers, consumatori, ...) hanno familiarità con la strategia/la policy? Se sì, cooperano con la sua implementazione? In che modo? Se no, quali sono gli ostacoli principali per una cooperazione efficace?
Tendenze nell’erogazione di SIG, evoluzione passata e futura

- Ci sono stati cambiamenti nell’approccio all’erogazione di SIG negli ultimi dieci anni, con particolare riferimento al suo settore? Di quali cambiamenti si è trattato (adozione di nuove politiche, privatizzazione degli erogatori di servizi, esplicita esigenza di integrazione, ...)? Quali sono i piani per riformare l’erogazione di SIG nei prossimi anni, con particolare riferimento al suo settore? Quali sono gli attori responsabili?

- Pensa che l’Italia/la Lombardia stia progettando di introdurre modi nuovi e innovativi nell’erogazione dei SIG, ad esempio attraverso l’integrazione dei settori, dei livelli amministrativi, delle fonti finanziarie, e così via? Come si può migliorare la situazione (ad esempio attraverso la preparazione delle nuove strategie, il rinnovamento di quelle esistenti, ...)?

- Conosce qualche esempio virtuoso di modelli e strategie nuove e innovative per l’erogazione di SIG?

Modelli d’integrazione nell’erogazione dei SIG

- Qualcuno dei documenti di policy per l’erogazione di SIG prevede l’integrazione di politiche, attori, strumenti, fonti di finanziamento? In che modo (ossia, quali sono i principali modelli di integrazione proposti)? Vi sono settori che hanno espresso maggiori necessità di integrazione? Per quali misure, in particolare?

- Questa integrazione sta anche avvenendo nella realtà? Se sì, quali sono i suoi effetti? Se no, perché no? Quali sono i problemi e gli ostacoli? Sono indicati con chiarezza gli attori responsabili dell’integrazione?

- Vi sono fonti finanziarie disponibili per l’erogazione della strategia? Se sì, quali sono? L’integrazione delle fonti finanziarie per l’erogazione di SIG è richiesta o supportata?