

TOWARDS BETTER GOVERNANCE OF QUALITY OF LIFE ON THE LOCAL LEVEL

GOVQoL | Empowering local governance of Alpine communities for a better quality of life

Naja Marot, Pina Klara Petrović Jesenovec, University of Ljubljana, SI
Erblin Berisha, Cemre Ay Betul, Politecnico di Torino, IT

Innsbruck, September, 16th 2025 | International Mountain Conference



1 Research background

2

Recommendations from RSA10 and specific objective of the Alpine Space Programme

R1. Acknowledge quality of life, its specific aspects, and the need for inclusive participation in policymaking

- A good **quality of life must be the goal** of all territorial and/or administrative policies and measures. Therefore, the policies should also address environmental challenges to secure good living conditions.
- Policies and measures concerning quality of life should recognise local challenges and risks (be **place based**) and consider local people's opinions and needs regarding quality of life (be **co-created by the Alpine people**). The characteristics of different types of Alpine areas should be acknowledged, as should the linkages between them, e.g. lowlands and highlands.
- **Spaces for discussions** on quality-of-life issues affecting people and stakeholders should be created. The Alpine Convention should continue with and upgrade its communication and other activities targeted at Alpine people and integrate the quality-of-life topic in them.
- **The role of public service and administration in policymaking and implementation should be strengthened** and made visible as an enabler of a democratic and long-living society.

The following SDGs can be achieved by implementing this recommendation:



Specific objective of the Alpine Space Programme: SO 4.1 - Enhancing institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders to implement macro-regional strategies and sea-basin strategies, as well as other territorial strategies

Priority 4: Cooperatively managed and developed Alpine region

Interreg
Alpine Space

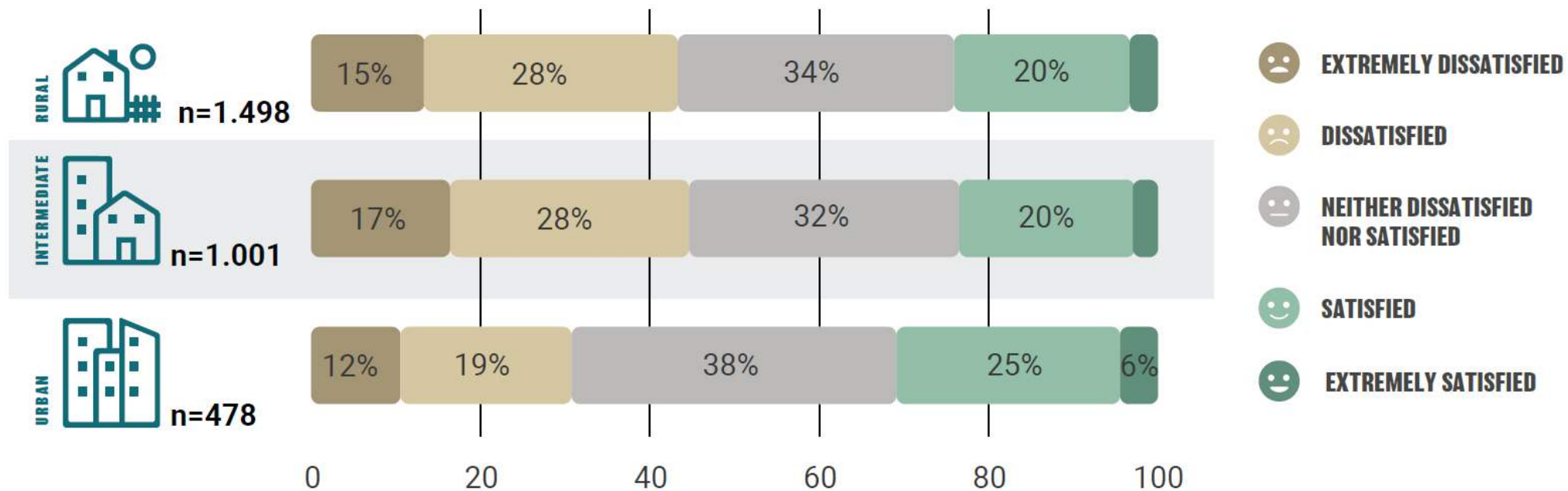


GOVQoL

1 Research background

3

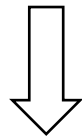
Governance topic as the worst evaluated of five selected topics of QoL (RSA 10, 2025)



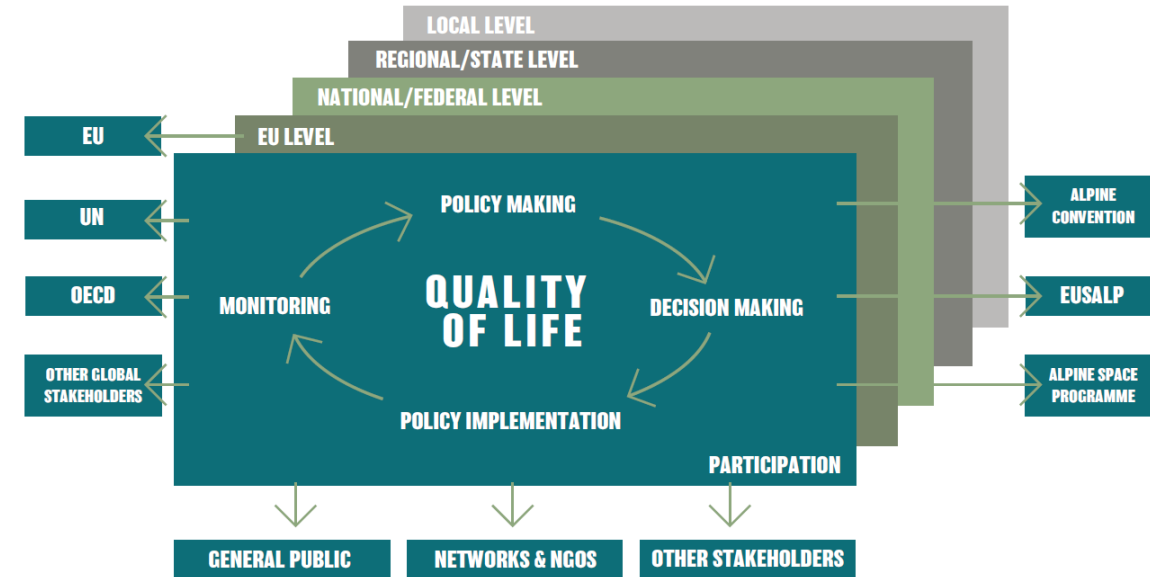
1 Research background

Current knowledge about quality of life governance in the Alps

- No common understanding and naming of the quality of life across the Alps, also well-being, life standard, welfare etc.
- Only Slovenia and Switzerland with the national policy, specifically focused on quality of life
- Cross-sectoral topic
- On regional/local level the topic is mainly covered in programmes, strategic documents, concepts action plans etc.



What is the state of the art of local governance of quality of life?



3 Methodology

Literature review and preparation of position paper

Literature review: articles, chapters, and other resources analysed to depict theoretical knowledge about QoL local governance, e.g. governance models, factors influencing QoL, role of local governance and various stakeholders etc.

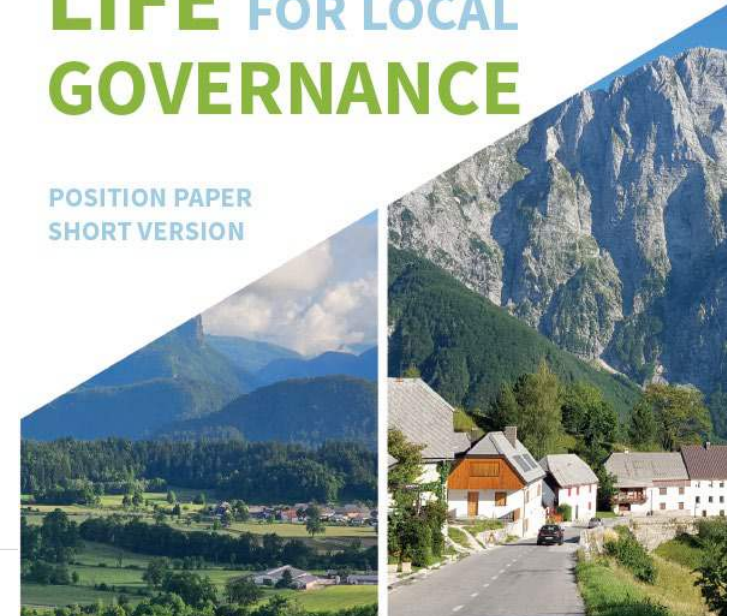
Preparation of position paper:

- Overview of existing knowledge
- Identification of major QoL topics on the local level, major governance issues, relevant stakeholders



RELEVANCE OF QUALITY OF LIFE FOR LOCAL GOVERNANCE

POSITION PAPER
SHORT VERSION



3 Methodology

Interviews with the local communities

Aims and objectives: Retrieving detailed information about current governance practices (cross-sectoral co-operation, public participation) and coverage of QoL

Timeline: June to September 2025

Method:

- **Questionnaire** in ENG and all Alpine languages, questions on current state of the local governance of QoL, major issues of QoL, policies and stakeholders included in the QoL, citizens' engagement in QoL-related policy preparation/ implementation
- **10 semi-structured interviews per country**, covering SI, FR, AT, DE and IT
- Various municipalities in terms of size (population/area), urban/rural character, location

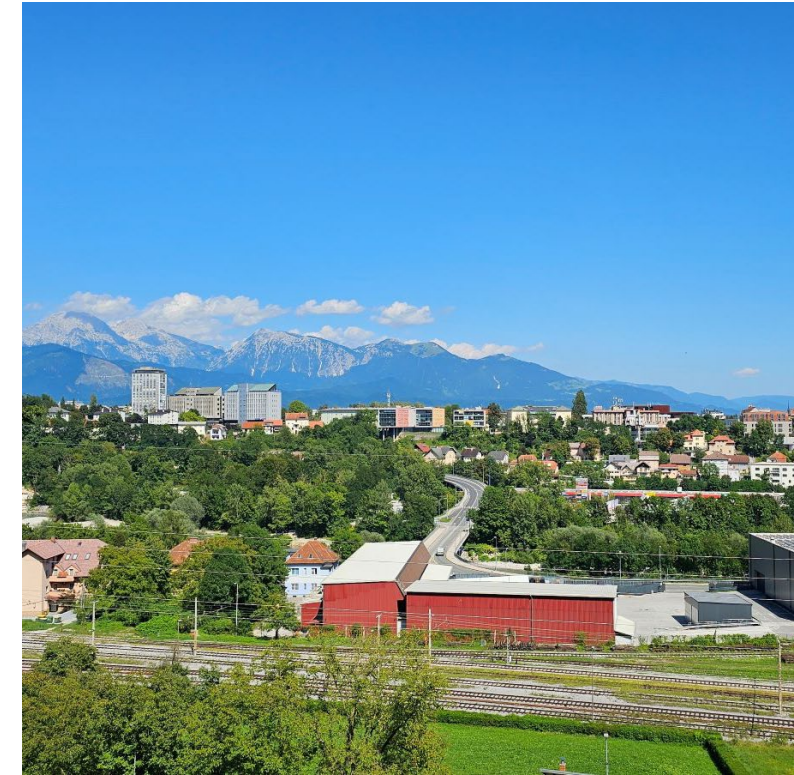
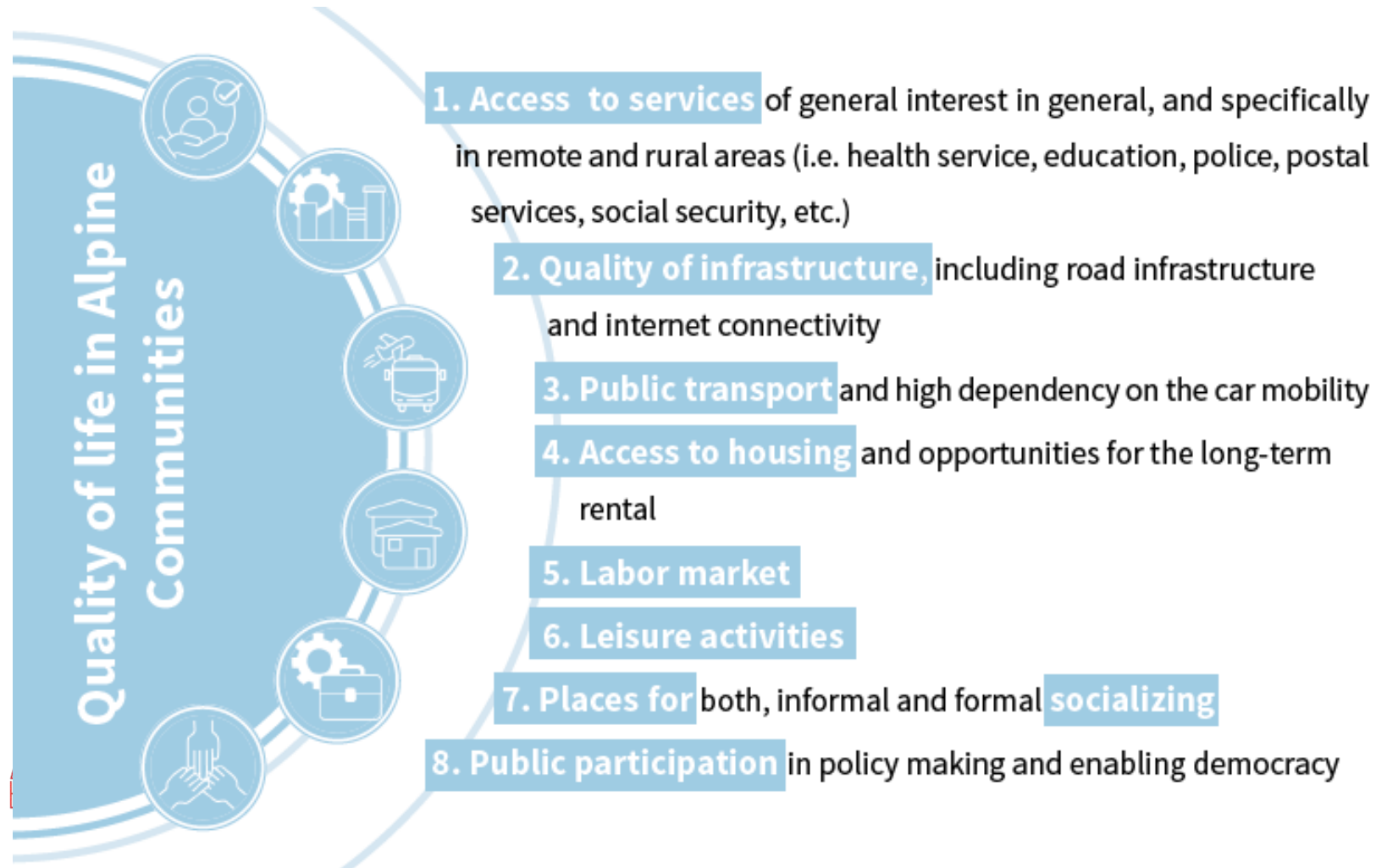


Photo: Pina Klara Petrović Jesenovec



3 Results

Major quality of life topics on the local level



3 Results

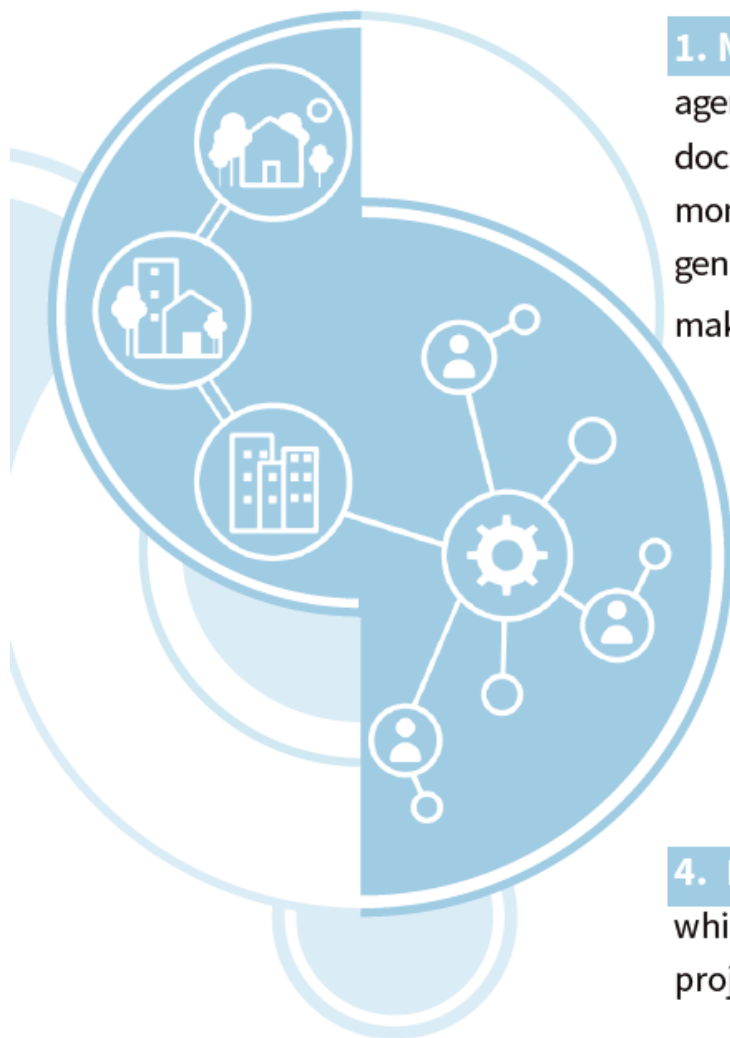
Major QoL-related governance challenges

- **The Alpine geomorphology** which influences the settlement patterns, accessibility and travel time to services, and the costs of maintaining and building the infrastructure;
- **Extreme weather events** and climate change as environmental factors causing infrastructural damage or even threatening health or life of the Alpine citizens;
- **Migration trends** which influence work market, job opportunities, and the holiday homes market as well;
- **Tourism as major economic activity** which on one side contributes positively to the economy and job market, but in the times of climate change also poses a future challenge;
- **Digitalisation and technological changes** which bring new solutions and options for societal life and work possibilities;
- **Changes in the lifestyle** towards individualisation which represents an obstacle to maintaining the social life in Alpine settlements.



3 Results

Major stakeholders



1. Municipalities should put the quality of life on the political agenda as a core topic and integrate it into the major strategic document. More to that, they are in charge of establishing the monitoring of quality of life, secure provision of services of general interest, and enable participation of public in policy making.

2. Local associations, local entrepreneurs, civil society and youth, specific social groups initiate the policy preparation and implementation. It depends on the how strong local communities' voice is, and what their impact on policy making can really be. They are also the sources and implementors of local bottom-up initiatives.

3. Utility and public service providers provide the services of general interests.

4. Local action groups represent a mix of local actors which discusses and determines bottom-up approaches and projects to contribute to better quality of life.

3 Results

10

Based on the interviews

- Local governance of QoL is varied and depends on the size of the municipality and its administration
- Municipalities recognize different topics, risks and challenges in regard to QoL
- QoL most often covered by the departments, responsible for social matters, infrastructure and spatial planning
- In smaller municipalities, no specific QoL-related policy nor monitoring, but instead, a direct dialog between the mayor and inhabitants
- QoL is not recognized as an umbrella topic of the local policies, however, it is seen as extremely relevant for the local communities



4 Further steps

Workshops with the 10 selected local communities will offer more in-depth knowledge

Preparation of Alpine umbrella roadmap

Research **feeds back to the EUSALP, Alpine Space Programme and multiannual programme of AC**, and specifically the WG on spatial planning and sustainable development, and the Alpine Climate Board (their lifestyles project)

Taken these challenges into account, **the role of the local communities** in securing good quality of life should be as follows:

- 1. Implementation** of the supranational, national and regional **policies** concerning quality of life, including the sectoral policies;
- 2. Preparation of the local strategic policies** and implementation measures (also as pilots) and to secure good quality of life;
- 3. Provision of the services** for the locals to secure access to daily good and basic services of general interest (public transport, health service, primary education and children care etc.);
- 4. Frequent monitoring of the quality of life** and the locals' satisfaction with it;
- 5. Integration of civil society** into policy making and implementation concerning quality of life;
- 6. Consideration of vulnerable groups** while preparing measure to support good quality of life, e.g. youth, elderly, and others.



Role of
Local Communities



5 Thank you for your attention.

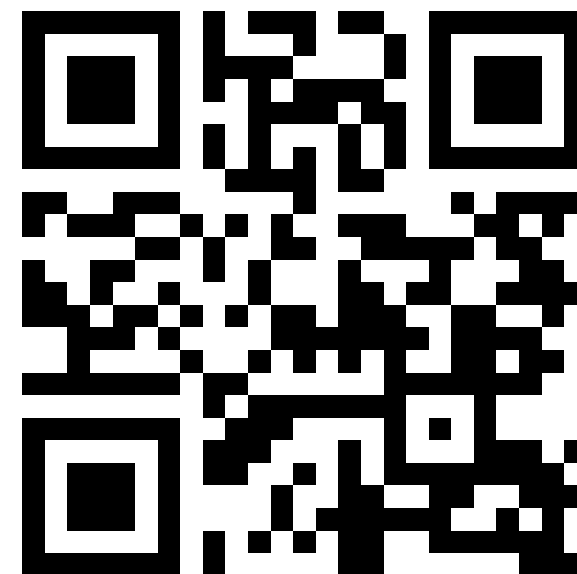
12

Learn more:

- Check out the position paper, available in all Alpine languages. Available via the project website: <https://www.alpine-space.eu/project/govqol/>
- 10th Report on the State of the Alps, available via Alpine Convention site
- **Join our observers' list** to receive news from the project. **Please fill in the form, accessible via the QR code or link:** <https://1ka.arnes.si/a/6b73e804>

Authors:

- Naja Marot, Pina Klara Petrović Jesenovec (UL, naja.marot@bf.uni-lj.si), Erblin Berisha, Cemre Ay Betul, Magda Bolzoni (POLITO, erblin.berisha@polito.it),



UNIVERZA V LJUBLJANI
University of Ljubljana

Interreg
Alpine Space



Co-funded by
the European Union

GOVQOL