

# How to make the Alps a more competitive tourist destination?

## Experiences from ClimAlpTour in German pilot regions

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# Key questions

- What can be done to make sustainable Alpine tourism more competitive? (i.e. new offers, ICT, health) What could be possible niches and how could they be exploited?
- How to shape the profile of the Alps as a top healthcare destination of Europe?
- What are the needs of the consumers, economic actors and policy makers?
- How can alpine regions/territories and the population better benefit from tourism?
- How can transnational cooperation help regions to better work together on tourism?

# Tourism – what we are speaking about?



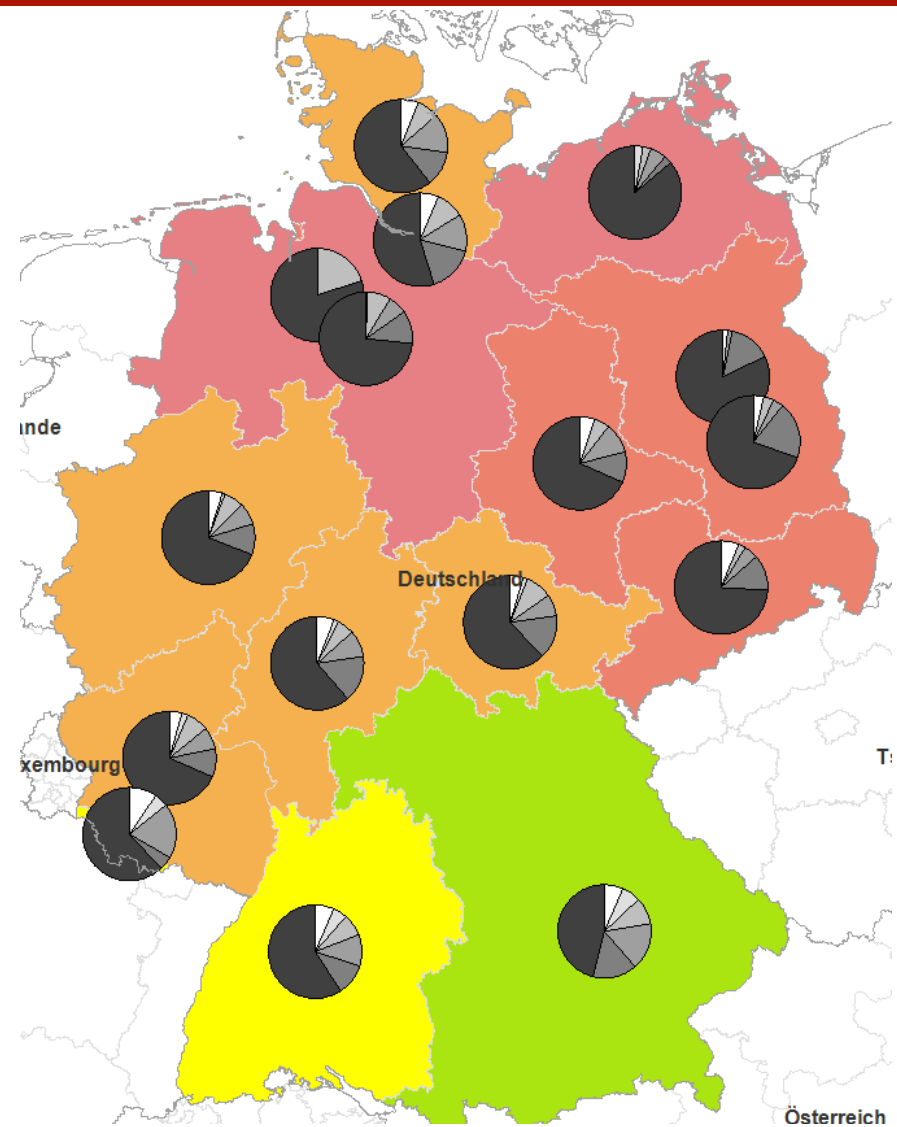
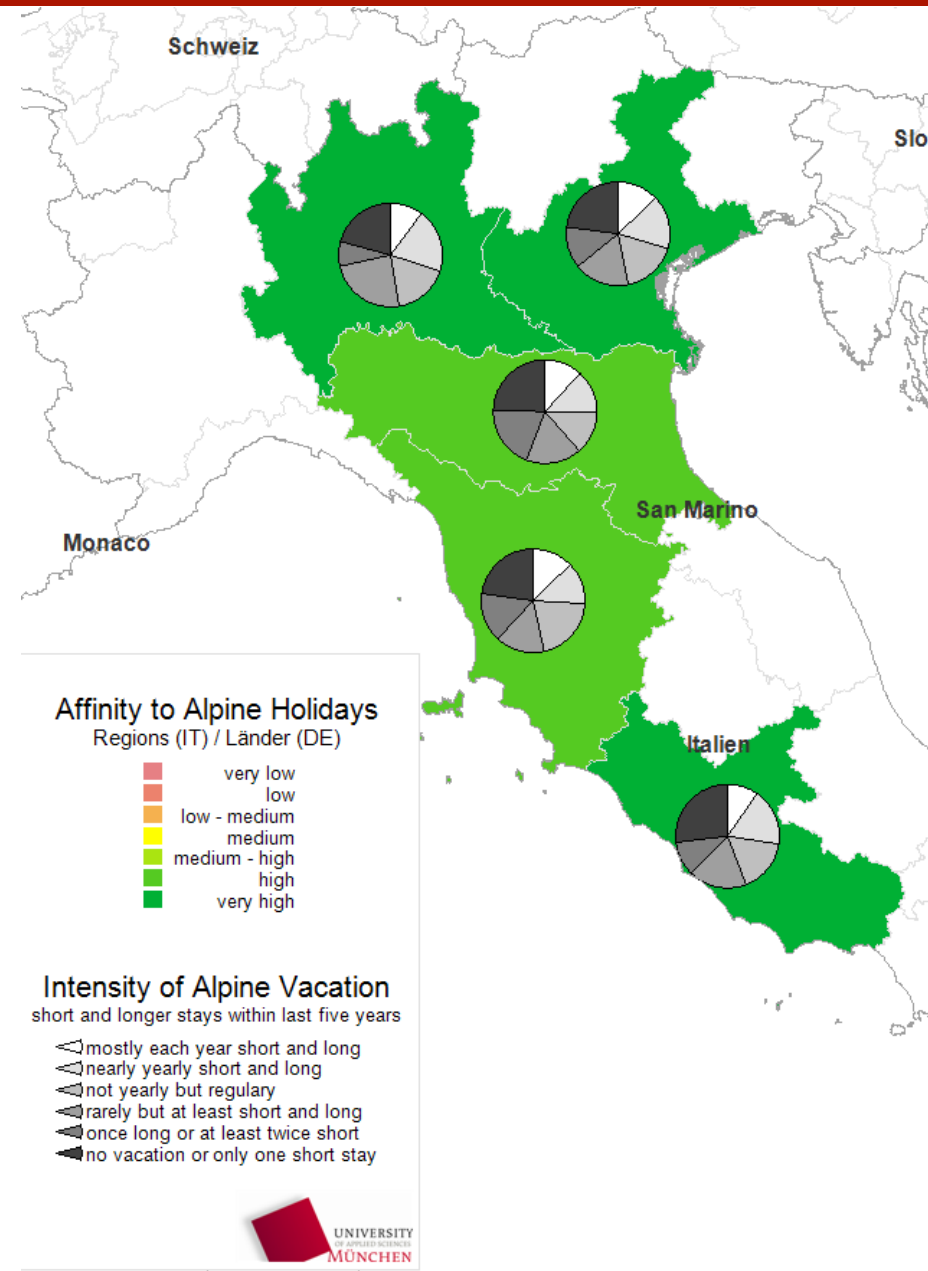
A: Tourism definition UNWTO:

at least one overnight stay independent from reason

B: But mostly seen in Alpine regions

each kind of visitor of a region because of holidays  
or leisure independent of the duration

A and B are mutually dependent



Emotional link of Germans to Alps as destination low

# Key questions I

- What can be done to make sustainable Alpine tourism more competitive? (i.e. new offers, ICT, health) What could be possible niches and how could they be exploited?
1. Touristic core product must be competitive (hospitality hardware + service) – sustainability cannot compensate missing competitiveness of core product
  2. We need a understanding of “nature experiences” as a product – to leave guests in a marvelous nature alone is not enough! They are mainly interested in nature – not sustainability!
  3. Most alpine regions believe to have a “USP” = unique selling proposition – but 99% are neither unique nor give a real proposition. Sustainable products based on unique local resources should be the answer to this deficit!

# Key questions II

- How to shape the profile of the Alps as a top health(care) destination of Europe?
  1. Healthcare destination  $\neq$  tourism destination  
most people do not want to get remembered / get the diagnose while holidays to have a serious health problem
  2. Wellness (even medical wellness) is not health(care)
  3. International transfer of patients need very specific services (i.e. linked to religion / traditions) and is not a specific key competence of the Alpine regions
  4. Only with a real competence focus an Alpine region can develop to a leader position – e.g. look to the history of Davos, Bad Reichenhall or Bad Hofgastein

# Key questions III

- What are the needs of the consumers, economic actors and policy makers?
  1. Policy makers should only set framework conditions
  2. Economic actors should act as entrepreneurs – not mainly as subsidy recipients
  3. Consumers are spoilt and well experienced in travelling – they want get easily „their“ individual product to a good price with a perfect service chain
    - ➔ destinations as marketing management organization acting between market (consumers and distribution partners) and regional tourism actors

# Key questions IV

- How can alpine regions/territories and the population better benefit from tourism?
  1. They should know about the real importance of tourism – very often
    - economic overestimation of tourism and
    - underestimation of negative impact of tourism
  2. Tourism must be seen as a sector which needs all other sectors – therefore tourism development strategies must optimize the overall added value – not only the added value in tourism
  3. Other sectors besides tourism should also be a part of strategies – only by this tourism will get a long term support



# Key questions V

- How can transnational cooperation help regions to better work together on tourism?
  1. Getting a better understanding of tourism demand in Alpine source markets and the supply of integrated service chains
  2. To get a better understanding of the spatial linkage between metropolitans and alpine tourism regions for leisure and housing
  3. To accept that tourism in many Alpine regions is not the one and only economic sector and therefore cannot be the only aspect of integrated sustainable development plans – at least a comprehensive approach covering the entire service sector is needed!

Future:  
  
something,  
what mostly already arrived,  
before we expected it.

