

ABSTRACT (Background and challenges)

In recent decades, key international conventions and frameworks, such as the Paris Climate Agreement, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the New Urban Agenda, and the Global Compact for Migration recognize, *inter alia*, that States have the primary role to reduce disaster risk, to promote sustainable development, to combat climate change and to address the global issue of migration. At the same time, they emphasize that responsibility should be shared with other stakeholders, including regional and local governments, the private sector, and local communities. Indeed, several major challenges affecting mountain areas worldwide (e.g., climate change, international and internal migration flows) do not stop at administrative borders. Hence, these multiple, transnational and national governance levels and the way they cooperate and interact among each other have a strong impact on how these international goals may be implemented, thus promoting the development of mountain areas.

Against this background, the WG "Mountain Governance & Global Challenges" thus aims at discussing different types of existing national, transnational and multi-level governance processes, instruments and models located in mountain areas both in Europe and worldwide in order to identify the related current and future challenges these areas need to address in the next years. They include not only legal and administrative issues, but also the livelihoods of mountain communities, their (often, spiritual) relationship with their land as well as internal and international migration flows and demographic changes, the interactions among different sectors and groups of the society in order to ensure social cohesion and the wellbeing of the communities.

Therefore, the WG "Mountain Governance & Global Challenges" plans to address the following questions:

1. What are the existing formal/informal mechanisms of cooperation/coordination among the institutional actors at transnational, transregional and subnational level in mountain areas?
2. What are the specific challenges, obstacles and success factors related to transregional/transnational/national and local governance and cooperation in mountain regions?
3. How do local communities contribute to mountain governance?
4. How can governance mechanisms support in finding the balance between the exploitation of natural resources in mountain areas and the livelihoods and the spiritual relationship of (some) mountain communities?
5. Which specific challenges and patterns regarding diversity governance do mountain regions present? How are public policies for the incoming inhabitants' integration in mountain areas characterized and inter-related at local/sub-regional and national levels?
6. Which interactions may be found among different sectors of the society in the same territory? Under what conditions (e.g., political, social, economic, environmental) can the incoming inhabitants become a driver for local development, in terms of social and cultural innovation, community resilience, and the rethinking of the relationship between urban and rural?