

Resilient mountain regions - Upper Valais region



Resiliency is the capacity to adapt to change and withstand adversity. It is a characteristic that Switzerland's mountain regions are called upon today to demonstrate. In deploying our resiliency tool, the region of Upper Valais and its various municipalities have joined forces to bolster their resiliency and control their destiny.

Switzerland's mountain regions are currently facing an array of major challenges, including natural hazards, climate change, an aging population exacerbated by the exodus of a young and well-educated generation, increasing competition in the tourism sector, and the need to secure basic services. Moreover, the financial, human and knowledge-based resources that are necessary to meet these challenges are limited.

First things first: the resiliency analysis

Working together with the Upper Valais Regional Development Center, EBP analyzed the resiliency of the following variables:

- Institutional structures and societal cohesion
- Finances
- Basic services
- Security
- Energy supply
- Tourism industry
- Business conditions
- Agriculture
- Forestry
- Housing

Client

Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) Swiss Federal Office for Spatial Development (ARE) Swiss Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN) Swiss Federal Office for Agriculture (FOAG)

Facts

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Contact persons

Christian Willi
christian.willi@ebp.ch

Franziska Lindström
franziska.lindstroem@ebp.ch

Roger Walther
roger.walther@ebp.ch

Dr. Christof Abegg

Using EBP's resiliency tool, the project team also assessed the region's resiliency in terms of 80 indicators related to these variables. The analysis is based on statistical data, municipal documents, and local expertise.

christof.abegg@ebp.ch

From analysis to viable mountain-region projects

The resiliency tool enables one to structure and visualize the compiled information, detect where there is a need for action, and determine what objectives need to be prioritized. An initial action plan replete with viable project proposals is then drafted as a guideline for long-term efforts to increase the resiliency of the municipalities.

Analysis as a basis for regional development

Integrated regional development strategies can then be devised by reconciling the resiliency analyses for the individual municipalities (bottom-up) with superordinate regional strategies (top-down). This novel approach connects the municipalities to one another and promotes cohesive local, regional and cantonal action.

The Swiss Sustainable Spatial Development Program

Carried out in the framework of the Swiss [Sustainable Spatial Development Program](#), the project also aims to outline solutions from which other regions in Switzerland could profit.