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Unequal transformation processes in the Dolomites area

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## AUTHOR'S NOTE

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## Introduction

- 1 The paper seeks both to give a theoretical and empirical contribution to the debate on repopulation dynamics, emerging both in the Alps (Corrado, 2010; Steinicke *et al.*, 2012) and in lower mountain ranges (Cognard, 2012), which has partly replaced the former discourse about depopulation in the Alps and in other European peripheries. The main questions addressed in the article are whether this development is more than a selective urban growth, whether it can be confirmed for integral parts of peripheral areas or just for a limited number of cases, what might be the driving forces of such dynamics and how they are interrelated to emerging issues, such as multilocal dwelling.
- 2 We argue that, in order to give a stronger interpretation of these questions, the intertwined and shifting relationship between permanent population, touristic second homes and second homes for multilocal dwelling has to be taken in account. On the basis of the elaboration of empirical data collected at municipal level in the five different provinces of the UNESCO World Heritage (WH) Dolomites region the Eastern Italian Alps, we show that a consistent repopulation by means of new inhabitants is taking place only selectively. This tendency is concentrating in areas that can count on good accessibility, located mainly in urban, periurban and periurbanising municipalities, thus confirming

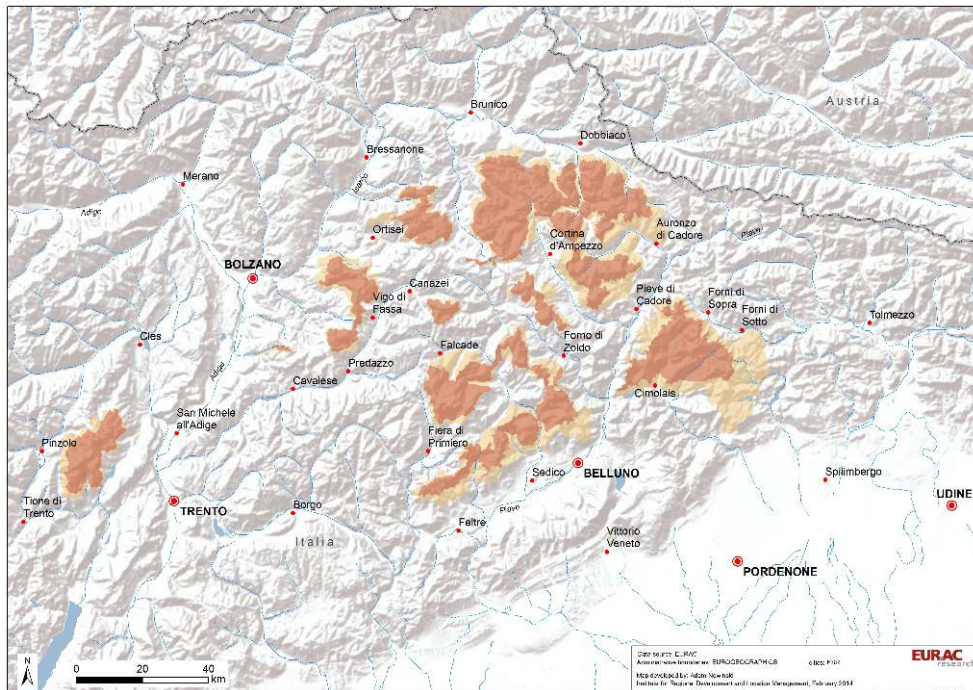
tendencies in act within but also outside the Alps (Diener *et al.*, 2005; Perlik, Streifeneder, Ravazzoli, 2013). Literature shows that this selective process can be covered by a larger number of second homes for temporary use, which have evolved in the Alps from a touristic offer to a new form of residence for multilocal dwellers (Ferrario, 2009; Perlik 2011). This tendency of multilocality is also observable in mountains all over the world (Cadieux and Hurley, 2011; Gosnell, Abrams, 2009; Janoschka, 2009; Moss, Glorioso, 2014), although it is often named under different labels like amenity migration (Moss, 2006) or lifestyle migration (McIntyre, 2009). Taking into account the empiric results, we argue theoretically with prevailing agglomeration economies (Alonso, 1971; Jacobs, 1969; Marshall, 1920; Puga, 2010). Such agglomeration advantages consist of spatial proximities between social actors providing a critical mass of qualified workforce in areas with good accessibility and a large diversified spectrum of services which can be offered for an affordable price due to high population numbers. Agglomerations enable the ability to profit from a large network of face to face contacts which help to find a job, to develop local identities and loyalties and to share and defend local specificities and common values in issues of value adding and governance. Agglomeration economies generate an attractiveness for new inhabitants resulting in agglomeration growth with periurbanisation and densification. This tendency can be observed worldwide<sup>1</sup>.

- 3 Moreover, we show that agglomeration processes are not prescribed determinant development paths: the case study region of the Dolomites is homogenous in its market presence, but it is heterogeneous in its economic and administrative structure. This is a main reason why the described dynamics are developing in opposite directions across the five different provinces of the Dolomites. Therefore, we suggest the need to take in account at theoretical level the complex framework of governance and regional regulation to explain the ongoing processes; nevertheless, since the analysis is mainly focused on quantitative data, the governance aspect will not be here tackled in depth. As a conclusive remark, we also discuss the controversial role of the UNESCO WH nomination as a key factor for fostering regional development processes.

## Case study area: the UNESCO World Heritage Dolomites

- 4 The territory of the WH Dolomites encompasses 137 municipalities and nine protected areas, spread among three Italian regions (Trentino-Alto Adige, Friuli Venezia-Giulia, Veneto) and five provinces (two – Trento and Bolzano - with autonomy status and three - Belluno, Udine and Pordenone - ordinary). The area has been inscribed on the UNESCO WH List in year 2009, according to two main criteria: the exceptional beauty of the landscape (criterion VII<sup>2</sup>) and the exceptional geological features (criterion VIII<sup>3</sup>). Not all the mountainous groups that for their geological features belong to the Dolomites are currently part of the territory inscribed in the WH List<sup>4</sup>: the current geographical delimitation of the UNESCO WH Dolomites Site is in fact the output of a selection that the provincial administrations, supported by an expert team, carried out during the nomination process. This process resulted in a so-called *serial* site, constituted by nine separate areas (*Systems*) (Figure 1).

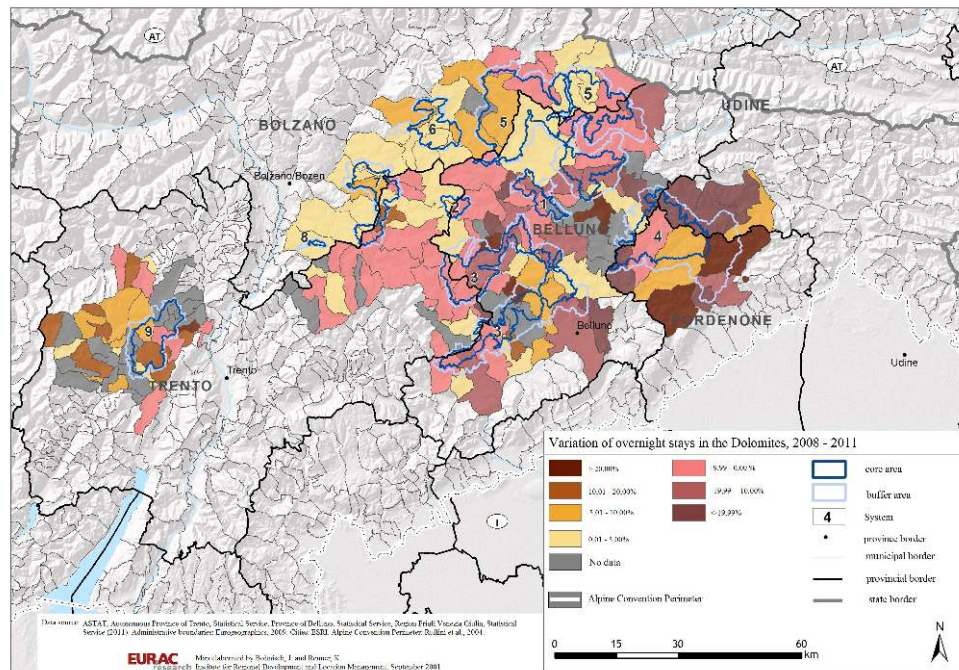
Figure 1. The UNESCO World Heritage Dolomites Region



Fondazione Dolomiti-Dolomiten-Dolomites-Dolomitis UNESCO

- 5 The governance system of the World Heritage Dolomites is complex, due to the different nature of the provinces involved and the multiplicity of actors responsible for the management of the area; in order to facilitate their coordination, a Foundation uniting the five provinces has been established. This Foundation has both a political and a technical coordination function (performed by the Foundation Board, the general secretary, the scientific committee and the so-called *Reti Funzionali*). The aim of the UNESCO WH Dolomites is therefore to share not only a conservation aim, but also to develop a common strategic vision for the overall area; this is particularly evident in the field of tourism and landscape planning, topics on whose the Foundation has developed a series of activities in order to elaborate common strategies (Elmi, Wagner, 2013).
- 6 Tourism is a key activity in the WH Dolomites: it developed on the basis of a rural agricultural society from the beginning of the second part of the 19th century with a mixed offer consisting both in hotel accommodation and second homes. The Dolomites area, encompassing both the municipalities directly inscribed in the WH Site and the neighbouring ones, constantly attracts significant tourism flows each year. Nevertheless, in the core UNESCO WH zones, these touristic flows are not equally distributed and have seen in the recent years a divergent development (Figure 2): while the province of Bolzano shows a constant almost homogeneous increase, the other provinces have a mixed pattern of growth, stagnation and decline, also in municipalities that have been for decades considered as key attractors of tourism flows.

Figure 2. Tourism development in the Dolomites after the inscription on the World Heritage List



EURAC, 2013

- 7 Besides tourism, the rural areas generated a vast handicraft culture, which transformed, in the last decades, to clusters of highly specialised SMEs of manufacturing industries. Mostly touched by this development have been the periurban areas among the main transportation axes and valleys. This is the case, for example, of the Cadore and Agordino area (in the Belluno province), which evolved to an internationally reputed eyeglasses production district and was seen with other Italian examples for a long time as a model for the preservation and regeneration (Dosi *et al.*, 1992; Piore, Sabel, 1984). Nevertheless, in recent years, due to an increase of exposure of these industries to a strong international competition, the industrial districts weakened and, despite an increase of exports, the eyeglass cluster could not maintain or increase the number of workplaces (Osservatorio Nazionale dei Distretti Italiani, 2013).
- 8 The Dolomites region is therefore an emblematic case when it comes to looking at how the combination between the repositioning of existing economic activities, the generation of new economic functions and the development of demographic dynamics differ within a group of sub-regions (in this case, five different provinces). This is especially interesting as the region is aiming at appearing at international level with a common image as WH Site. Local stakeholders' expectations towards the UNESCO nomination are in this sense high, especially concerning a homogeneous development of tourism in all the territories, but also regarding the possibility of counterbalancing the abandonment of some municipalities. Nevertheless, until now, the inscription of the area on the WH list has had different impacts. The common nomination process to become WH Site has highlighted the difficulties in elaborating a single vision and common policies for this territory. This is mainly due to the heterogeneous ongoing economic and demographic dynamics which, in their turn, are affecting aspects, such as second homes, traditionally linked to tourism.

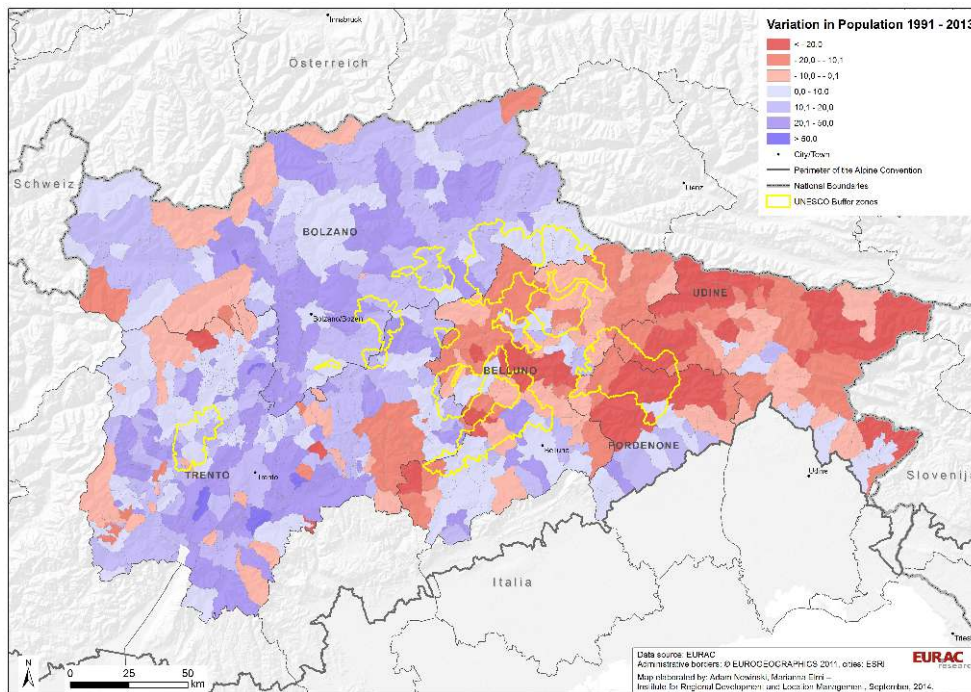
## Methodological approach

- 9 In order to investigate the research issues through the analysis of medium and recent short-term demographic variation, tourism and second home dynamics, a data collection has been carried out at municipal (LAU 2) level. This geographical level can account for small-scaled differences within the provinces and the Dolomites area. Moreover, in order to give an account of the ongoing dynamics in a broader area and to draw conclusions on the effect of the inscription in the WH List on the UNESCO municipalities in comparison with the other surrounding mountainous municipalities, data regarding both the municipalities directly bordering the UNESCO WH area and the alpine<sup>5</sup> municipalities belonging to the five provinces where the World Heritage Area is located have been collected. This allowed building a dataset of 589 municipalities overall, 137 of which belonging directly to the World Heritage Site, and 452 to the surrounding alpine area.
- The built database includes the following LAU 2 data:
  - Resident population in years 1991, 2001, 2008, 2009, 2011 and 2013
  - Tourism overnight stays in the years 2001 and 2010<sup>6</sup>
  - Number of overall and of permanent dwellings in year 2001 and 2011<sup>7</sup>
- 10 The collected data allow showing the divergent development between provinces from a manifold perspective: on the one hand, the growth, stagnation or decrease of permanent inhabitants and tourist activities and, on the other hand, the growth of temporary (multilocal) residences and demographic stagnation or decline.

## Population dynamics in the Dolomites area

- 11 For a long time the debate about demographic development in the Alps was dominated by highlighting depopulation processes. In the 1990s this debate became more differentiated and turned to a quantification of urbanization and metropolisation processes inside and outside of the Alps (Perlik, 2001). In the last years, under the influence of the “amenity migration approach” (Moss, 2006) a new tendency has been postulated, the tendency of repopulation, often induced by second homes and multilocal dwelling (Corrado, 2010; Steinicke *et al.*, 2012). Recent census and post-census data now allow us to refine this picture for the case study area, by showing the differentiated development on sub-regional level through a reconstruction of the variation up to 2013 for the municipalities of the UNESCO WH region and the neighbouring municipalities (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Population dynamics in the Dolomites Region 1991 – 2013



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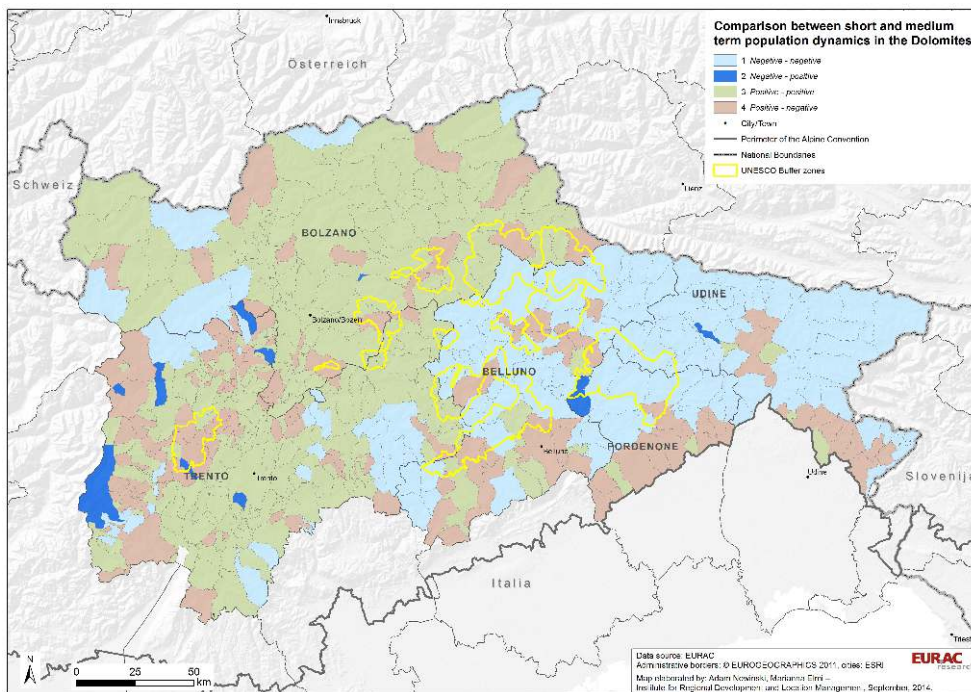
- 12 The distribution of population in the Dolomites from year 1991 to 2013 shows that a single demographic pattern is not evident in the area, thus contradicting the idea of one single ongoing repopulation macro-tendency. In fact, the most consistent increase of population remains located mainly in the proximity of small or medium sized urban areas and in the valleys along the main transportation axes. This is particularly evident in the Adige valley (in the proximity of the urban area of Trento), in the Valle Isarco, Val Pusteria and in the western part of the Bolzano province (close to the urban area of Bolzano), as well as near the city of Belluno. This tendency corresponds to former results in other Alpine areas (Perlik, 2001). As a complementarity to this process of agglomeration, and despite evidences of increase of population in some localized areas, a decrease of population in remote areas, which coincide mainly with the core mountainous sites of the WH Dolomites in the provinces of Belluno, Udine and Pordenone, can be highlighted. This is even more relevant, considering that the phenomenon can be observed also in traditionally extremely important tourist areas, such as, for example, in the northern part of the Belluno province (Valle del Boite and Cortina d'Ampezzo). The data therefore suggest that the central areas of the Dolomites are facing a challenge in maintaining the attractiveness both for local and new inhabitants despite the fact of the UNESCO nomination of 2009 and despite the still relevant (but not growing) number of tourism overnights stays.
- 13 Since a single time series tends cannot account for a more complex overview of potential repopulation dynamics, we have carried out, within the period 1992 – 2013, a comparison between the dynamics taking place at medium (1991 to 2007) and at recent short – term (2008 to 2013) level. From this analysis, four types of patterns, associated with different combinations of dynamics emerge, as shown in Table 1. To each of this patterns, a potential ongoing process has been associated.

Table 1. Comparison of medium and short term dynamics in the analyzed area

Demographic Variation 1991-2007	Demographic Variation 2008-2013	Patterns	Potential ongoing processes
+	+	Positive reinforcing pattern	Steady growth
+	-	Positive pattern inverting	Agglomeration, multilocal practices
-	+	Negative pattern inverting	Periurbanisation, new inhabitants, far commuters
-	-	Negative reinforcing pattern	Depopulation

- 14 Based on the four categories highlighted in Table 1, Figure 4 shows the combination of medium and short- term dynamics in the broader Dolomites area.

Figure 4. Comparison between medium and short term population patterns in the Dolomites region



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- 15 The data show that, on the observed timeframes, the phenomenon of recent repopulation tendencies constitutes just a small part of the multiple processes taking place in the Dolomites; on the contrary, a reinforcement of existing trends is rather observable. Moreover, looking at the number and type of cases where, after a period of population



loss, a stop of this tendency can be observed, we can conclude that is not possible to speak about general repopulation dynamics<sup>8</sup>. In more remote areas, we can rather observe a stagnation or stop of the depopulation tendency, without a consistent gain.

- 16 Apart from this overall pattern of agglomeration, a main divergence concerning demographic variations can be observed across different administrative units. While in the eastern provinces of Belluno, Udine and Pordenone, agglomeration processes do not seem to be mitigated by any other counterforces, in the eastern provinces of Bolzano and Trento, the growth or stabilization of population is not only located close to urban areas, but appears more diffused, so that only very remote areas have suffered of a constant depopulation dynamic. In these two provinces, the spatial pattern has maintained its polycentric structure along the agglomerations of Bolzano and Trento, and the local centers such as Cles (in the north-eastern part of the Trento province) and Brunico (in the western part of the Bolzano province). The distribution of these different dynamics suggests that a main explanation factor can be sought in the difference in territorial regulations and governance policies regarding remote areas. An in depth comparison of population dynamics between more remote UNESCO WH Dolomites and non UNESCO WH municipalities confirms this interpretation. In the autonomous provinces of Trento and Bolzano, no significant differentiation exists between population dynamics in the more marginal UNESCO municipalities and the other municipalities. On the contrary, in the provinces of Udine and Pordenone – particularly in the province of Pordenone – UNESCO municipalities show a negative population trend in comparison with the other periurban ones, which are acquiring population. This pattern can be explained by the mechanisms of agglomeration advantages and the varying achievements of the provincial policies in counterbalancing these tendencies by maintaining population in remote municipalities, even in the ones that have a high touristic potential. One explanation for that can be found in the status of autonomy status of the provinces of Trento and Bolzano, which allow these provinces a broader decision-making span concerning territorial policies and a higher margin of taxation reallocation. Moreover, comparing the dynamics concerning the rate of natural increase (the difference between births and deaths) and the migratory balance at provincial level for the years 2001 – 2013 (source: ISTAT, 2013), different patterns can be observed. While the provinces of Trento and Bolzano can count both for positive natural growth and migratory balance in the observed periods, the provinces of Belluno, Udine and Pordenone have an overall negative natural growth and a positive migratory balance. The latter compensates in all three cases the negative natural growth. The WH Dolomites appear therefore as an area in which demographic tendencies are going along with agglomeration pattern and new functional relations between tourism and the other economic sectors. Within this issue, the analysis shows that the role of the second homes as new economic function emerges as crucial.

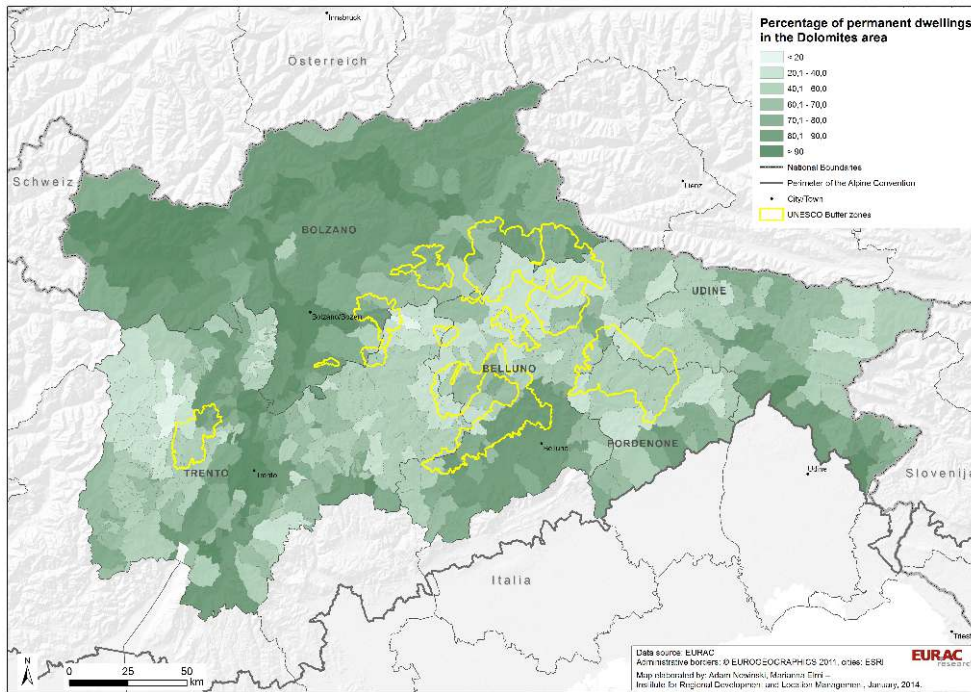
## The changing role of second homes in the Dolomites: from tourism to metropolisation

- 17 Although different definitions of second home have been formulated in the literature, for the current analysis we adopt as a common denominator that second homes do not host permanent inhabitants<sup>9</sup>. The role of second homes in the Alps is multifaceted and has changed over time: in a first development phase, they have mainly been functionally associated with the tourism sector, as a means of attracting tourism flows through the

creation of a differentiated offer for new types of clients. With the stagnation of traditional alpine tourism in the Alpine arc, described since a long time (among others: Bourdeau, 2012; Schuler, Perlik, Pasche, 2004), second homes has served also as a means for hotel owners to maintain tourist activities through the creation of modest economies of scale or by selling their property to real estate developers for the creation of secondary homes. The recent development of second homes in the Alps has seen a change through the modification of their personal use by heritage, acquisition or access by assignment of family or friends. This has changed the functional character of the region, expressed in economic terms, from an export-based economy to a residential economy<sup>10</sup>. The processes of functional change also influence the self-perception of second home owners: with an increasing frequency of second home visits, the owners' status turns from one of a tourist to one of a multilocal dweller, who willingly accepts higher expenses to dwell in both places and benefits from their respective advantages (Duchêne-Lacroix, Hilti, 2013; Perlik, 2011; Weichhart, submitted).

- 18 The case study area shows different paths in second homes development that has undergone a significant variation according to the province. In general, it can be stated that in the years from 1960 on, to different extents, second homes have been a means for the development of the touristic offer in the whole Dolomites region. There are nevertheless differences in the impact and incidence of the phenomenon. In the provinces of Trento and Belluno, the local administrations have given an impulse to second homes as a key for the increase of tourism (Andreotti et. al, 2011); in the case of Trento, a subsequent limitation of the number of second homes per municipality through the 16/2005 law took place. The province of Bolzano, on the other hand, focused on the parallel improvement of the hotel sector and on the maintenance of the traditionally strong agricultural sector and farm holidays linked to it (*Urlaub auf dem Bauernhof, agriturismo*). Moreover, the spatial planning legislation was already fixing some limits to the expansion of second homes from the 90's (Provincia Autonoma di Bolzano, 1997). In the provinces of Udine and Pordenone, the strong dynamics of outmigration and the less relevant historical touristic tradition have allowed for only a partial development of second homes for a touristic purpose. In these provinces, nevertheless, depopulation has had relevant impacts resulting on a high number of non-permanent dwellings that are outside the traditional touristic offer circuit.
- 19 The most recent data on permanent dwellings available at municipal level show recurring features in their distribution across the Dolomites municipalities (Figure 5). The areas that show the highest percentage of permanent dwellings are the one located in the valleys served by the main transportation axes and the periurban mountainous areas. In particular, urban and periurban municipalities along the main North - South Brenner axis in the provinces of Trento and Bolzano show, in general, a level of permanent dwellings above 70%. In the overall Dolomites region, these levels can be found only in the periurban area of the city of Belluno and in the prealpine areas of the provinces of Udine and Pordenone. These areas clearly serve as areas of permanent residence.

Figure 5. Permanent and non permanent dwelling in the Dolomites region



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- 20 Despite this apparently homogeneous pattern, significant differences concerning the occupation of dwellings exist across provincial borders: as with the population dynamics highlighted in the previous paragraph, we can again observe that, in the province of Bolzano, also more remote and touristic areas maintain a percentage of permanent dwellings above 70%, while in the provinces of Belluno, Udine and Pordenone, as soon as the proximity to urban areas decreases, the number of permanent dwellings tends to decrease too. In particular, in the province of Trento, the only peripheral area that maintains levels of permanent dwellings above 70% is the Non Valley (located in the north eastern part of the province).
- 21 Additionally, more recent data on dwellings can be drawn from the national Italian census carried out in the year 2011 (ISTAT, 2013). These data are available only at aggregated provincial level and therefore it is not possible to compare directly municipal variations; nevertheless, they show a stable situation regarding permanent dwellings in almost each province of the Dolomites, with an exception of the Belluno province, which is losing 4% of its permanent dwellings. By comparing this data with the 2001 data and with the population data, it can be hypothesised that this loss of dwelling in the Belluno province is mainly taking place in the more remote areas, and not in the periurban ones.

Table 2. Development of permanent dwellings 2001 – 2011 in the Dolomites provinces

	2001	2011
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	Total number of dwellings	Permanent dwellings	Percentage of permanent dwellings	Total number of dwellings	Permanent dwellings	Percentage of permanent dwellings
Belluno	134.644	86.586	64%	151.614	91.653	60%
Bolzano	197.175	172.031	87%	219.417	199.419	91%
Pordenone	132.806	110.422	83%	153.650	126.650	82%
Trento	291.813	192.517	66%	331.375	219.724	66%
Udine	273.482	210.998	77%	304.367	232.779	76%

- 22 Despite the substantial differences between provinces, several common features can be highlighted if the areas that maintain a relevant percentage of permanent dwellings: the proximity to the main transportation networks and axes, the location close to relevant centres and the fact of being set in a context that is not strictly connected to a functional specialization, but is rather developing towards a mixed function between tourist, agricultural, service and manufacturing. We can therefore conclude that an agglomeration and periurbanisation phenomenon can be evidenced, with a higher number of permanent dwellings in urban and periurban areas and a lower amount of permanent dwellings in the more remote ones that are also showing a weakening of the traditional touristic function in favour towards a “leisure landscape” function (Ferrario, 2009).

## Discussion

- 23 On the basis of the empirical analysis, we have observed that, in the remote areas of the WH Dolomites, the phenomenon of substantial repopulation by the growth of permanent residents is, at the moment, limited to few municipalities. Rather, we have highlighted the reinforcement of existing trends of agglomeration growth, which shapes into the growth of cities as well as the growth of small and medium-sized local centres close to urban areas, whose attractiveness can be seen in the framework of an extended periurbanisation. In line with analogous processes taking place outside the alpine area, the municipalities which are constantly gaining inhabitants are therefore those with privileged access to and from the main centres. This relativizes the extent and the impact of the phenomenon of new migrants as well as it concerns the hopes of regional policies and as it puts into question the approach of amenity migration (as a real migration) for the European Alps.
- 24 Moreover, we have highlighted that this pattern strongly differs on the basis of administrative provincial borders: including the periurban municipalities and the secondary centres, evidence highlights that agglomeration growth is stronger and more polycentric in Bolzano and Trento than in the other provinces.
- 25 The data show that there is a clear distinction between areas where population and tourism structures remain strong, while other parts are developing a “functional shift”,

also towards “leisure landscapes”. This latter dynamic can be found mainly the case in the provinces of Belluno, Pordenone and Udine. An example of this transition process is represented by the Cadore and Agordino areas, which developed tourist and manufacturing functions in the past and have only partially entered an agglomeration dynamic. But also the touristic areas that have been traditionally seen as “winners” are in a phase of repositioning, such as what is happening in other mature alpine touristic destinations. Therefore, we can observe a specific constellation in the case study area: on the one hand, the area is homogenous in its physical structure, its presence and image in the touristic market and for multilocal dwellers as well as for professionals in conservation issues (NGOs, researchers). On the other hand, the area is heterogeneous in its socio-demographic dynamics, with strong differences that run along the provincial borders, which suggest that development paths strongly depend on administrative regulations and local-specific institutional systems. This discussion is strongly connected with the role of the UNESCO nomination, since it has raised the expectations of local touristic stakeholders to get an instrument to re-launch mature tourist destinations and to ameliorate the region attractiveness for current and new inhabitants. Until now, these expectations have not been fully fulfilled, also in touristic terms. On the basis of the results, we can therefore argue that a strategy for the improvement of attractiveness - not only for tourists - in the UNESCO WH Dolomites cannot be successful if it does not overcome a sectorial point of view focused on tourism (Elmi, Wagner, 2013). Strategies tackling the UNESCO nomination and the connected issues only from a touristic point of view overlook the economic structural changes, which have created new economic realities that are shifting towards a residential economy. Their character depends on the purchasing power and the specific demands of a new clientele, composed by commuters or multilocal dwellers. Expectations that see in these changes a stabilisation of the demographic problems and treat these new actors as part of a repopulation should bear in mind that these new structures are very volatile if they are not underpinned by a tissue of local production, which is able to be anchored and flexible as well.

## Observable mechanisms and concluding remarks

- 26 The empiric research on the UNESCO WH Dolomites area has shown different socio-economic processes which can be summarised in the following dynamics: a strong tourism sector has so far provided a stable demographic development of permanent inhabitants while a declining tourism structure has resulted in a stagnation or decline of permanent population, with the growth of second homes. These traditional processes are currently overlaid and modified by an ongoing agglomeration growth with periurbanisation features, where more remote areas are experiencing a functional shift from tourism destinations to “leisure landscapes”.
- 27 Since these processes are clearly definable along the province borders, it can be concluded that different regulations of legislation (included, among others, the autonomous character of the provinces of Bolzano and Trento), different development goals and different governance forms play a crucial role in the development of the demographic and residential path. This leads to the conclusion that coherent polities and governance could be strong leverages to steer the described transformation processes in each province.

- 28 Since the observed phenomena are still ongoing, one main challenge for further research will be to analyse how the role of non-permanent dwellings will evolve in parallel with the weakening of the traditional touristic model; moreover, the link between difference administrative and governance systems (and the related policies) and emerging patterns should be explored in depth. Finally, the impact and opportunities related to the emergence of new leisure and dwelling practices on the regional development, especially in areas that are facing a functional shift, should be further explored.

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## NOTES

1. Due to the promised advantages, the protagonists of a tertiarised economy and new models of living practices favour the development of urban areas with enlarged labour markets (allowing commuting by public transports) and privileged options for social interaction (having a broad range of culture and entertainment). These preferences also include rural-looking landscapes (Perlik, 2011). Agglomeration economies can turn into diseconomies when cities grow too quickly without regarding basics of good governance, social cohesion and environmental quality (Camagni, 2005; Zheng, 2001) or – especially in the case of tourism – when a metropolis or resort town becomes a mature destination (Pechlaner *et al.*, 2009).
2. “To contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance” (UNESCO, 2013).



3. "To be outstanding examples representing major stages of earth's history, including the record of life, significant ongoing geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features" (UNESCO, 2013).
4. Such as the Sella Group, at the border between the provinces of Trento and Bolzano.
5. Included in the perimeter of the Alpine Convention.
6. For the municipalities located in the provinces of Udine and Pordenone (8,7% of the total number of municipalities) no tourism data are available for 2001. The oldest data available are of 2006.
7. The national census data from 2011 are only available at aggregated provincial level.
8. The percentages of short - term population gain go in these cases from 0,16% to 2,84% with two outliers in the higher values above 8%: the municipalities of Ponte Gardena (Bolzano) and Amblar (Trento Province), located respectively close to the regional county seat of Bolzano and the municipality of Cles, local centre of the Non Valley in the north-western Trento province. The other values can be considered more representative of stagnation of tendency inversion phenomena.
9. Based on this definition, the percentage of second homes has been calculated based on census data (ISTAT, 2001), through the ratio between the number of homes inhabited by resident population and the total number of homes available.
10. In the export-based model (North, 1955), the inhabitants of a given region produce for external markets.

Consequently, they will transform their home region according to their interests of living *and* working. In residential economies (Davezies, 2008, Segessemann, Crevoisier, 2013), the inhabitants live mainly from the revenues which they produce(d) in other regions or countries. Therefore, one can expect that they will develop different strategies for the regions they are involved with: For the export-producing regions, they will be interested mainly in economic competitiveness with high-standing suppliers and commercial services. For the residential regions, their interest will be dominated by high-standing private services and a non-disturbing residential environment.

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## ABSTRACTS

The article analyses the recent status and development of permanent inhabitants and second homes in the UNESCO World Heritage (WH) Dolomites area in the Italian Alps. First, the results show that a growth of permanent population is ongoing selectively in the urban and periurban areas, confirming earlier research in the Alpine arc and showing that agglomeration advantages are taking place. Second, the results show that these processes are parallel to a shifting use of second homes, announcing a transformation from an export-based to a residential economy in which second homes seem not to be homogeneously complementary to the tourist sector. Third, the Dolomites are not a homogenous region: despite the joint application process for WH site involving five provinces, demographic and economic differences can be highlighted along the provincial borders. This proves that demographic development is strongly path- dependent and conditioned by institutional settings and legislation. Therefore, ongoing strong agglomeration advantages and institutional differences are more decisive for the economic and demographic transformation in the Alps than single strategies carried out by local tourism consortia or enterprises. This brings to a relativization of the emerging debate about new migrants: regions

with stable economic structures profit by gaining permanent residents, while regions with declining structures up to now attract mainly multilocal residents.

## INDEX

**Keywords:** Alps, repopulation, second homes, multilocal dwelling, economies of agglomeration advantages, regional regulation

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