

## **Umbrella Topics: Water / Demography**

### **How can a social balance be found for the Alpine society of the future?**

*Alpine areas are affected by the complete range of challenges that societies of all member states of the European Union face. The generation conflict might even be felt more seriously in Alpine areas than in other regions. Migration from southern countries is not only a problem for countries like Malta, Greece or Italy, but all other European nations have to support these states by finding solutions and integrating refugees. All other kinds of minorities must be integrated as well – who are they and how can this problem be solved?*

### **How can the decrease of the young population in rural Alpine areas be prevented?**

*In Alpine areas more and more young people leave the countryside and move to urban areas or even leave the Alpine regions altogether. Although there are a lot of attractive free-time activities, young people may feel that they are forced to leave their native regions in order to find better job opportunities somewhere else. On the other hand, more and more people decide to spend their time of retirement in the leisure area of the Alps. What can be done to reach a balance between the generations and to keep up the minimum social standards which are required?*

### **How should water be used as a natural resource?**

*Water is one of the main natural resources in Alpine areas. It's an important source of clean energy and the Alps provide the biggest reservoirs of drinking water in Europe. One point for discussion is whether this resource should be publicly or privately managed. Another problem is that there is too much water in some areas, where it can cause serious natural hazards, whereas there is too little of it in other Alpine regions. What can be done to control and to distribute risks and chances fairly?*

### **How can people in Alpine regions make use of rivers and lakes?**

*Rivers establish the link between mountains and urban areas in the Alps. They can be used for a variety of leisure activities by people who are looking for recreation and fun and they can in some areas even fulfil the functions of a means of transport. Lakes provide special opportunities for water sports and serve as popular tourist attractions. Considering the fact that there must be a lot of different experiences in various Alpine states, ideas and concepts should be listed to reach a mutual understanding about ways of making good use of water for people in Alpine regions.*