



**Joint declaration**  
**on the EU Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP)**  
**20 November 2018**

We, the representatives of the states and regions who have come together as the General Assembly of the Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP) in Innsbruck today,

RECALLING the political commitments outlined in the Joint Declaration adopted by the General Assembly on the occasion of its meeting on 23 November 2017 in Munich, Bavaria, on 13 February 2017 in Rottach-Egern, Bavaria, and 25 January 2016 in Brdo, Slovenia,

TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION the European Parliament resolution of 16 January 2018 on the implementation of EU macro-regional strategies, which stresses the invaluable and innovative contribution of macro-regional strategies to cross-border, cross-sectorial and multi-level cooperation in Europe,

ACKNOWLEDGING the important role of the Alpine Convention, the INTERREG Alpine Space Programme and further funding programmes for the implementation of the Strategy and of all stakeholders as important contributors of ideas, initiatives and activities which are giving life to the Strategy,

AFFIRMING that macro-regional strategies are powerful instruments for enhanced, integrated, participatory, transnational regional policies in the EU and its neighbour regions.

CONVINCED that the EUSALP can prove that all the actors working together can strengthen economic, political and social cohesion at the heart of Europe to the benefit of the people living in the Alpine Region and other parts of Europe.

have agreed on the following:

## ***Political framework***

1. We welcome the progress achieved to date in the implementation of the Strategy and its Action Plan at all levels, particularly in the Action Groups, as evidenced in the 2nd Report on the implementation of the EU-Strategy for the Alpine Region of the Action Groups presented to the Executive Board of the Strategy. We thank the Slovenian and the Bavarian presidencies for giving impetus to implementation and the Action Groups for their continuous work towards realizing the aims of EUSALP. We ask all involved actors to continue their efforts to implement the Strategy to the best of their abilities.
2. We expressly welcome the activities of the Tyrolian presidency 2018 that have been undertaken in cooperation with the partner States and Regions of the EUSALP and thank the Tyrol for its efforts. In doing so, we take note of the declaration “Sustainable Land Use and Soil Protection – Joining Forces for Nature, People and the Economy”, which has been supported by many political representatives of the States and Regions of the Strategy responsible for the topic.
3. We support the procedural steps developed by the Executive Board in order to elaborate the list of implementation priorities in an inclusive way. To ensure political ownership for the implementation of the Strategy, we hereby endorse the list of implementation priorities from the Action Group Work Plans for the year 2019 as laid down in the Annex of this declaration.
4. We acknowledge the strengthened role of Macro-regional Strategies in the draft legislative framework for cohesion policy after 2020 as presented by the European Commission in May 2018.
5. We are convinced that making best use of the future EU funding programmes 2021-2027 is highly important for implementing EUSALP priorities. To that purpose we underline as crucial to join forces of EUSALP with programme actors in preparation and implementation of programmes by supporting the identification of potential fields of interventions and by further developing appropriate cooperation mechanisms. We ask the Executive Board to take an active role in this process.

6. We appreciate the close cooperation between EUSALP and the INTERREG Alpine Space Programme so far and encourage this to be enhanced.
7. We also foster the coordination and alignment of EU Programmes to the actions of the EUSALP. We call on the European Commission and the European Parliament to ensure that EU programmes consider EUSALP and support its implementation.
8. We express our satisfaction of the work carried out through the AlpGov project. Building on this experience, we encourage the Executive Board to carefully assess possible options to ensure support to the successful work of all Action Groups on a long-term perspective beyond 2022.
9. We reiterate our commitment to ensure that the remaining 2014-2020 ESI funds contribute to achieving also the EUSALP objectives in our States and Regions where appropriate.
10. We welcome the establishment of joint meetings between the Executive Board and the Action Group Leaders.

### ***Youth***

11. We commit ourselves to involving in particular young people in the activities of EUSALP and we acknowledge the important contribution that the youth can bring to EUSALP.
12. We recognise the first steps that already have been undertaken under the Bavarian and Tyrolean presidencies to exploit synergies with existing youth structures in the Alpine Region. In particular, we welcome the initiative youth.shaping.EUSALP, which was initiated by the Tyrolean presidency together with Switzerland and Liechtenstein and supported by CIPRA International and Alpine Town of the Year.
13. We emphasise the importance of preserving the Alpine region as a worthwhile place to live for future generations, in harmony with the environment. In this regard, we take note of the 10-point plan on dual education, which was developed by Action Group 3.

14. We entrust the Executive Board on this basis with the development of a proposal on the best modalities to involve the youth in the work of EUSALP.

### ***Communication***

15. We acknowledge that the success of the strategy also depends on the ability to make its benefits known. Therefore, we commit to develop an attractive EUSALP narrative to illustrate the benefits of the Strategy to the citizens.

### ***Collaboration with partners***

16. We consider that further cooperation with Alpine networks can bring an added value to EUSALP. Therefore, we ask EUSALP to continue and enhance cooperation with other transnational bodies, Non-Governmental Organisations and Institutions and initiatives of the Alpine Region, such as the Alpine Convention and the Alpine Space Programme, with a view to further develop concrete actions in their specific thematic fields
17. We thank the European Commission for the continuing close cooperation with and the support of all participants involved in implementing the Strategy. We consider the European Commission an integral part of EUSALP, whose involvement creates tangible added value for the Strategy. We deem it indispensable that all concerned Directorate-Generals of the European Commission are involved in the implementation of the Strategy.
18. We thank the European Parliament for its continuously strong commitment to the implementation of the Strategy, as evidenced by financing the Alpine Region Preparatory Action Fund. We deem the Alpine Region Preparatory Action Fund essential to ensure an easy and low-level funding process of smaller projects, which can serve as an idea pool and a starting point for further projects.

### ***Presidency***

19. We are determined to pursue the political continuity of the EU Strategy for the Alpine Region and to actively implement the concept of the Trio presidency. In

this regard, a continuous exchange with the previous and subsequent EUSALP presidencies is of central importance.

20. We transfer the presidency 2019 to Italy and welcome that Italy intends to pursue the implementation priorities annexed to this declaration and to enhance them in the 2019 Programme in the framework of the leading theme “Green Economy” . We ask the Action Groups and the Executive Board of the Strategy to support and implement these initiatives within their respective area of competence to the best of their ability.
21. We entrust France with the presidency of the Strategy in 2020.
22. Building on the request to build a multi-annual perspective for the presidency of EUSALP in the Declaration of Munich, we invite interested states and regions from the EUSALP territory to already come up with a proposal at the next General Assembly in order to be entrusted with the presidency for 2021.

Annex: Evolving list of political priorities for the implementation of Objectives 1-3 of the EU Strategy for the Alpine Region

Adopted in Innsbruck, Austria, on 20 November 2018

## **List of implementation priorities of the EUSALP Action Groups**

### **Objective 1: Fair access to job opportunities, building on the high competitiveness of the Region**

#### **Action 1:**

- Establishing a transnational research and innovation network in the Alpine Region:
  - starting the process to develop a common Research and Innovation Agenda in the Alpine Region, also using the potential of Joint Programming
  - creating a macro-regional Innovation Ecosystem, starting from Open Innovation

#### **Action 2:**

- Bioeconomy: Harmonized call in order to strengthen the transnational value chain
- Wooden constructions in the Alpine Region: to collect various initiatives and to insure coherence between wood projects in the Alpine space
- Health tourism in the Alpine Region

#### **Action 3:**

- Establishing a transnational educational space in line with the goals of the new ERASMUS+ programme, both for an overall growth of competencies and knowledge and for dual professional training in the Alpine Region

### **Objective 2: Sustainable internal and external accessibility to all**

#### **Action 4:**

- Modal shift to sustainable modes of transport and developing an EUSALP travel-information platform

#### **Action 5:**

- Implementing the Smart-villages-approach in the Alpine Region
- Carrying out a feasibility study on a cross border digital backbone
- Analyzing the scope of cross border commuting in the entire Alpine Region, collecting good practices and implementing new approaches in selected areas

**Objective 3: A more inclusive environmental framework for all and renewable and reliable energy solutions for the future:**

Action 6:

- Reducing land consumption and fostering soil protection
- Improving sustainable and integrated water management

Action 7:

- Establishing the Alpine Region as a model region for a trans-European Green Infrastructure by developing multifunctional, cross-sectoral solutions and spotlighting rural-urban relationships

Action 8:

- Further development of integral natural hazard management to an Alpine risk governance in the Alpine Region
- Adaptation strategies and resilience concepts related to global and climate change for the Alpine Region

Action 9:

- Optimisation of the energetic and environmental footprint of the building sector
- Conceptualization and development of an EUSALP Energy Observatory, a monitoring instrument and decision-making tool for energy planning and policy making on the regional and macro-regional level
- Facilitate and support the dialogue and the setting up of effective cooperation mechanisms between the EU macro-strategies in the field of energy policy