

ITALIAN EUSALP PRESIDENCY 2022

REVIEW OF A YEAR OF PRESIDENCY:
RESPONDING TO THE ENERGY CRISIS, MITIGATING THE
EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND INVOLVING YOUTH.



AND THENCE WE CAME FORTH TO SEE AGAIN THE STARS

INFERNO, XXXIV, 139 - DANTE ALIGHIERI



Climate change prevention and the establishment of the EUSALP as the first carbon-neutral EU macro-region were the main topics of the Italian Presidency. In 2022, the energy

crisis hit Europe triggering a Europe-wide economic recession affecting the lives of all citizens in the EU: energy poverty and energy security determine the public and political landscape. How energy security, prosperity and climate protection can be combined is a challenge that we will have to face in the coming months and years. As a political forum of the Alpine States and Regions, the EUSALP will have to provide strategies and answers to the people of the macro-region to ease the negative effects of this crisis.

A second priority was to make EUSALP governance more effective and to strengthen political commitment. Through dialogue with the EUSALP States and Regions, the Presidency developed a rotation mechanism for the EUSALP Presidency, guaranteeing more stability and predictability. We facilitated the financing of the Action Groups until 2025 and the establishment and formal anchoring of the Technical Support Structure in EUSALP governance. I am particularly pleased that Switzerland and its cantons commit to EUSALP as the Presidency in 2023. We will continue to work closely with our Swiss partners in the spirit of the EUSALP. I thank everyone very much for their commitment during the Presidency year 2022 and wish Switzerland and all of us a successful 2023.

Arno Kompatscher
*President,
Autonomous Province of
Bolzano/Bozen - South Tyrol*



The Italian Presidency imagined 2022 as the year of the renaissance after pandemic. Nevertheless, we were soon confronted with a conflict scenario at the border of the Eu-

ropean Union and a deep energy crisis. In this context, our Presidency maintained the focus on strategic topics to demonstrate that a strong and joint political response framed into a stable international cooperative strategy – which is EUSALP – can be a laboratory of thoughts and actions that mitigate the effects of negative contingencies and co-design a better future.

In the framework of the European Year of Youth, we aimed at effectively involving youth in the Strategy, especially by supporting the newly established Youth Council with dedicated initiatives and reinforcing its connection with the Action Groups - which are the engine of our cooperation. We also worked to balance and re-interpret the connection between Alpine cities and valleys by fostering the smart development of inner areas and multiplying opportunities for personal and professional fulfillment. In this context, we paid attention to the decisive role that women can play in contributing to the socio-economic development of the Alpine region and counteracting depopulation trends.

With these premises and our joint will, we can commit to address together the common challenges linked to climate change as well as reinforce the role of communities in overcoming the energy crisis and building a sustainable future “... and thence we came forth to see again the stars” (Divine Comedy, *Inferno* XXXIV, 139).

Maurizio Fugatti
*President,
Autonomous Province of Trento*

WORKING TOGETHER FOR A MORE SUSTAINABLE, INCLUSIVE, DIGITAL AND WELL-GOVERNED EUSALP AREA

The Presidency worked to reinforce the commitment and involvement of all the actors of the strategy, from the local up to the European level, including youth, in order to foster cooperation.

The major outputs of this year include the adoption of the rotating mechanism of Presidency, the support to the integration of the Technical Support Structure within EUSALP, the launch of the EUSALP Energy Award, the elaboration of five main priority areas to prevent climate change and support energy transition, and the inclusion of the Youth Council within EUSALP.

The Italian Presidency promoted cultural initiatives at the occasion of the 70th Trento Film Festival and by supporting the EUSALP football cup.

Attention has also been paid to the role of women as key actors for the socio-economic development of Alpine areas and in counteracting depopulation trends, by providing a contemporary interpretation of the relation between cities and inner areas in the Alpine region.

Presidency areas of intervention:

- Tackling climate change by promoting energy efficiency and energy transition
- Fostering smart villages and sustainable local development
- Youth empowerment and involvement within EUSALP, in the framework of the European Year of Youth
- Deepening the collaboration between the Action Groups, the Executive Board and the Presidency
- Guaranteeing continuity of launched initiatives: sustainable tourism and mobility; cooperation on natural risk management and spatial planning, multifunctional forests
- Strengthening EUSALP governance and support the funding and embedding processes



TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE BY PROMOTING ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND ENERGY TRANSITION

PRIORITY 1

- Organised under the motto “Reliable, affordable and sustainable energy in the Alps”, the **6th EUSALP Energy conference** allowed energy stakeholders to network and exchange on ways to increase energy efficiency and encourage the decarbonisation of the energy system.
- The **EUSALP Energy Award 2022** honored seven initiatives that contribute to citizen activation and participation in the energy transition through communicating and sensibilization of citizens, participatory approaches, and innovative financing models.
- With the workshop “**Hydrogen: Which priorities for the Alpine Regions?**”, the Presidency facilitated the cooperation of key actors in the field of hydrogen in transport.
- Two **Energy Dialogue** sessions with citizens, municipalities and enterprises encouraged a multi-stakeholder debate at local level to exchange on practices to tackle the energy crisis and overcome energy poverty.
- The event **Liguria, EUSALP, Europe: mobility perspectives to 2050** has focused on the evolution of sustainable mobility in the EUSALP area, in the framework of the EU goal to become climate-neutral by 2050.

PRESIDENCY PERSPECTIVE

The Italian Presidency advocates for climate change prevention and energy transition to become the common goals to be pursued in a transnational way by all EUSALP bodies with the objective that the Alpine area becomes the first carbon neutral macro-region, with the main part of the energy consumed coming from local renewable sources.



FOSTERING SMART VILLAGES AND SUSTAINABLE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

- The **Green Infrastructure goes Business Award** supported green economy in the Alpine macro-region, promoting innovative products, services, business models and ideas with a positive impact on Green Infrastructure (natural spaces with high ecologic quality) and offering winners a tailor-made coaching to bring their business and ideas to the next level. The next edition will take place in 2023.
- Throughout the year, the Presidency strived to organise **environmentally friendly events**, taking into consideration the environmental impact of goodies, services and suppliers chosen.
- The **EUSALP Roadshow** increased the visibility of EUSALP through a series of presentations for the general public by experts, political representatives and project leaders who presented their activities in the EUSALP framework.
- The **Digital Alps Conference 2022** aimed at unleashing the potential of digitalisation in the Alpine region, showcasing initiatives and projects focusing on digital skills.
- The conference **What does the future hold for the Alps?** held during the Trento Festival of Economics offered a concrete analysis of the relation between centres and peripheries of the Alpine region, also highlighting the role that women can play in this context.

PRIORITY 2

PRESIDENCY PERSPECTIVE

The Presidency hopes the digitalisation of the EUSALP territories will continue and allow peripheral areas to reap the benefits, secure services, and enable developments that strengthen the local economy and the local community.





YOUTH EMPOWERMENT AND INVOLVEMENT WITHIN EUSALP

PRIORITY 3

In the frame of the European Year of Youth 2022, the Presidency was particularly active in involving youth and developed a dense programme of activities for the members of the Youth Council and other youth organisations.

- The **Youth Council (YC) meets the Action Groups (AGs) session** allowed YC members to exchange on working opportunities (AG3), green mobility (AG4), green infrastructure (AG7), and energy communities (AG9). "This collaborative approach allowed to strengthen the cooperation between the YC and AGs and will be replicated in the future."
- **How to better communicate EU and EUSALP:** the YC and other youth organisations benefitted from a training programme on communication.
- The YC submitted proposals on cross-border cooperation on environmental and transport issues to the **Conference on the Future of Europe**.
- In line with the European Commission Strategic Foresight Report, the Presidency organised a series of **"future workshops"** on jobs of the future in the Alps, future digitalisation in the Alps, a future order in the Alps on integrated local development.
- A dissemination-training programme was organised for high school students to create a network of young EUSALP ambassadors in the Alpine Regions. The e-book **"Make your voice heard from the Alps! Discover how the EU and EUSALP work and how you can make a change"** has been released and will be available for all the high schools that request it.
- 3 youth summer camps were organised in **Germany, France** and **Italy**, focusing on mobility, natural resources and youth participation in the Alpine region, with more than 40 participants.

TIMOTHY SUNG, EUSALP YOUTH COUNCIL MEMBER

The EUSALP Youth Council's first full calendar year has been accompanied by the Italian Presidency. Building on the efforts of the French Presidency, the Presidency has engaged with the Youth Council and facilitated closer contact and cooperation between the Youth Council and other EUSALP bodies. The YC meets the AG session was an opportunity to directly exchange on possible synergies. The provision of workshops and trainings has strengthened the Youth Council's capacities. These solid foundations set by the Italian Presidency will help bring the youth' constructive and imaginative voice into EUSALP bodies. We look forward to working with Switzerland and future presidencies to ensure that the youth perspective is integrated into EUSALP work.



DEEPENING THE COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE ACTION GROUPS, THE EXECUTIVE BOARD AND THE PRESIDENCY

- The Presidency **supported and promoted the Policy Recommendations** elaborated by the AGs, aiming at making the results and outcomes of EUSALP better known and starting the dialogue with relevant policy makers.
- Several steps were taken to **facilitate the monitoring of the strategy** in relation with the Action Groups, especially with the support to the elaboration of the **Nomisma report** that identified targets and indicators to keep track on the strategy progress and results.
- A reflexion has been initiated on how to strengthen the role of AG Leaders as engine of the strategy and drivers of change in their Regions.
- Based on the approach developed in the AlpGov2 Project, the Presidency invited AGs to **strengthen synergies** and work together on **cross-cutting thematic priorities** in the framework of the Annual Forum 2022, with the aim to co-envision the future of EUSALP.

PRESIDENCY PERSPECTIVE

Acknowledging the strategic importance of the Action Group work within EUSALP, the Presidency, together with all the Executive Board members, and in particular the Alpine Space Programme, has made every effort to secure funding for the Action Groups for the coming years. To ensure national and regional commitment, Action Groups should keep on working on issues of importance for the EUSALP territory, through a concrete cross-cutting and transnational approach.

PRIORITY 4



GUARANTEEING CONTINUITY OF LAUNCHED INITIATIVES

PRIORITY 5

- The Presidency promoted the adoption of the **EUSALP declaration “Rail Transport in the Alpine Region – Joining forces for a sustainable transport and mobility system”**, calling on the EU to create a level-playing field between transport modes as a basic requirement for an effective modal shift, to optimise the potential of rail to serve as the backbone of a connected transport system, and to improve infrastructure provisions for rail transport.
- The workshop **“How may forest and timber practitioners as well as civil society respond to the climate crisis?”** allowed to foster exchange among timber business representatives, forest practitioners, consumers and citizens to tackle the climate crisis that is threatening forests.
- The conference **Climate change adaptation in municipalities and ComuneClima ceremony** highlighted the importance of municipalities to develop strategies of adaptation to climate change and their capacity to involve local citizens and economic actors.
- Within the framework of the **70th edition of the Trento Film Festival - Mountains and Cultures**, a EUSALP Award “What keeps me here” celebrated the movie that best captures the spirit of the Alpine macro-region. The Festival also showcased two photography exhibitions that echo EUSALP initiatives on pastoralism.

PRESIDENCY PERSPECTIVE

Aware of the importance of ensuring continuity of EUSALP activities, the Presidency has willingly supported the initiatives launched in previous years. The Presidency underlines the importance of focusing on a limited number of concrete macro-objectives that can be reached in the territories to create greater identification and strengthen political commitment. In this sense, the Presidency supports the cross-cutting areas identified in particular EUSALP as a carbon neutral macro-region.



GOVERNANCE, EMBEDDING AND FIVE COMMON MAIN TOPICS

- The Presidency supported the streamlining and strengthening of the embedding process through two dedicated workshops: the **Financial Dialogue Network Workshop “taking the embedding process one step further”** and the **embedding workshop**.
- The Presidency supported the establishment and full functioning of the **Technical Support Structure** in cooperation with the Alpine Space Programme and the Commission.
- The Presidency facilitated the setting-up of a **rotating mechanism of EUSALP Presidency**, guaranteeing long-term visibility and equal sharing of responsibility among all the delegations.
- The Presidency organised **Trio Presidency meetings**, ensuring continuity and coherence of EUSALP activities.

FIVE COMMON MAIN TOPICS

The Presidency suggests to align EUSALP to five cross-cutting main priorities in order to make the strategy more agile and responsive to common territorial challenges:

1. Becoming a carbon neutral macro-region in the shortest possible time (energy transition)
2. Expanding and strengthening circular economy in short supply chains
3. Promoting a sustainable management and use of natural resources, especially water
4. Strengthening the sustainable, carbon neutral and emission free mobility
5. Strengthening the region's socio-economic prospect by investing in digital solutions and smart villages.

PRIORITY 6





Green Infrastructure goes business award



www.gi-goes-business.eu

apply
now!

Open for submissions
24 November 2022 – 31 January 2023



We are looking for **innovative ideas and sustainable products, services and business models** with positive impact on Green Infrastructure (GI) in the EUSALP perimeter. The award 2023 **calls particularly for solutions with benefits for climate change mitigation and adaptation.**

**Win a business coaching
tailored to your needs!**

The competition is open for

- Start-ups
- Established enterprises
- Institutions
- Associations
- Private persons

Businesses can make use of Green Infrastructure to find solutions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions or to adapt to climate change effects like rising temperatures, droughts, and natural hazards. For example, by

- fostering ecological restoration and climate protection in forests, peatlands, and river floodplains,
- developing natural cooling systems with trees and plants,
- nature-based tourism and products or
- by providing new services for awareness raising and proactive climate resilience planning.



MORE INFORMATION



www.alpine-region.eu

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