



**Joint declaration**  
**on the EU Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP)**  
**13 February 2017**

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 Rottach-Egern today,

CONFIRMING OUR INTENTION to implement the Strategy of the European Union for the Alpine Region (EUSALP) together,

BEING AWARE that challenges such as globalisation, fundamental structural changes in agriculture and tourism, de-industrialisation, digital divide and limited access to services of general interest, climate change, urbanization and demographic change will affect this Region in particular,

BEING CONVINCED that the Strategy offers the opportunity to tackle these challenges together by means of cross-border, interregional and transnational cooperation and thus further strengthen the economic, political and social cohesion in the heart of Europe,

RECALLING that the Strategy concerns more than 80 million people in 48 regions and seven states in the Alpine Region, including five EU member states and two non-EU member states,

RECALLING that this bottom up Strategy enhances solidarities and synergies between mountainous and non-mountainous areas, urban and rural areas and peripheral regions surrounding the Alps,

NOTING that the content of the Strategy is determined by the participating states and regions, but that the involvement of local authorities, enterprises, the civil society, associations, non-governmental organisations, and citizens is essential for the success of the Strategy,

have agreed on the following:

1. We explicitly acknowledge the progress achieved to date in conceiving, adopting and implementing the Strategy and its Action Plan. The commitment of all participants to the Strategy has led to considerable momentum for its implementation, which needs to be upheld to the best of our abilities.
2. Our special thanks go to the European Commission for the close cooperation with and the continuing support of all participants in developing and implementing the Strategy, as well as securing its endorsement by the European Council, and to the Republic of Slovenia for having held the first presidency over the Strategy and for its work in setting up a fully operational governance structure.
3. We entrust the Free State of Bavaria with the presidency of the Strategy in 2017 and welcome that, during its presidency and in cooperation with the other EUSALP Member states and regions, Bavaria intends to pursue the following focal topics within the four objectives of the Strategy. We agree that these focus topics do not represent an exhaustive coverage of issues and projects we are working on within the Strategy, but a list of exemplifying initiatives:

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

- Action 1 - Focus topic: Establishing a cross-border research network in the Alpine Region;
- Action 2 – Focus Topic: Master plan bioeconomy in the Alpine Region;
- Action 3 - Focus Topic: Establishing a transnational educational space for dual vocational training in the Alpine Region;

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

- Action 4 – Focus topic: Improving cross-border connectivity in public transport;
- Action 5 - Focus Topic: Supporting public services with a three-dimensional digital landscape model of the entire Alpine Region;

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

- Action 6 - Focus topic: “Next Generation” - Addressing the needs and ideas of the young generation for a good future of Alpine farming;
- Action 7 - Focus topic: Establishing the Alpine Region as a model region for the development of a European Network for Green Infrastructure (TEN-G);
- Action 8 - Focus topic: Further development of integral natural hazard management to an Alpine risk governance in the Alpine Region;
- Action 9 - Focus topic: Energetic optimisation of buildings in the Alpine Region;

***Objective 4: A sound macro-regional governance model for the Region (to improve cooperation and the coordination of action)***

- Supporting the work of the Action Groups in the areas of monitoring and financing implementation measures, knowledge management, as well as communication via the AlpGov project;
- Raising the awareness of political leaders, institutional actors and citizens on the European, national and regional level for the activities of the Strategy.

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.

4. We are delighted by the strong commitment of the European Parliament to provide supplementary financial support through a preparatory action for the implementation of EUSALP.
5. We are aware that the Strategy can only be successful if clear, verifiable and realistic targets for its implementation are set and resources assigned. Therefore, we entrust the Executive Board to develop the necessary monitoring and reporting procedures. We ask the Action Groups of the Strategy to regularly inform the Executive Board on concrete targets for the activities of the Action Groups in the following year as well as on implemented measures and the degree to which targets

have been achieved. We ask the Executive Board to report to the General Assembly on the achieved targets of the Action Groups.

6. We underline that the Action Plan of the Strategy has been developed according to the principle of “bottom-up”, involving the broadest possible range of relevant actors in the Alpine Region. Also for the implementation of the Action Plan, it is especially important to continuously involve as many relevant actors as possible in the Alpine Region, e. g. local authorities, enterprise, the civil society, associations, non-governmental organisations and citizens, in the issues and projects of the Strategy and its bodies. We thus ask the respective presidency-in-office to enable all relevant actors in the Alpine Region to continually participate with project proposals and other contributions in the implementation of the Strategy.
7. We are pleased that the co-funding of the AlpGov project by the ETC Alpine Space Programme enables the necessary financial support to the work of the Action Groups. We are aware that AlpGov is a key project for the implementation of the Strategy and therefore needs specific attention and support from all involved partners.
8. We recognize the important role of the European Commission as independent facilitator of the Strategy and invite the European Commission and the respective presidency-in-office to secure the close alignment of the AlpGov project with the work of the Action Groups. We entrust the Board of Action Group Leaders (BAGL) with supporting the Executive Board coordination within and between the Objectives of the Strategy.
9. We recognise that the Strategy offers a specific added value in formulating the needs of the Alpine Region and ask the European institutions to include it adequately in the policy making process. In particular, we are convinced that the strategy needs to provide a tangible benefit to the citizens in the Alpine Region. This requires also a coordinated use of available funding on all levels. We commit ourselves to the targeted use of the legal and financial instruments within our responsibility and ask the European institutions to ensure that the macro-regional strategies will be adequately considered in the EU Cohesion Policy and other relevant EU policies beyond 2020.

10. We welcome the proposal of Tyrol to assume the presidency over the Strategy in the year 2018 and transfer the presidency to Tyrol for this period of time. Furthermore, we note that Italy is interested in assuming the presidency in 2019.
11. We are aware that the implementation of the Strategy requires planning and coordination beyond the scope of a single term of presidency to establish political continuity in the activities. We thus ask Bavaria, together with the outgoing Slovenian presidency and the following Tyrolean presidency, to develop and implement a procedure for the timely and ordered handover of a presidency to the subsequent presidency.

Adopted in Rottach-Egern, Bavaria, on 13 February 2017