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# **SIMPLON ALLIANCE**

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## **ALPINE ACTION PLAN 2022**

**“Towards net-zero emissions in the transport sector in the Alps by 2050 at the latest”**



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# 1. NEED FOR ACTION AND OPPORTUNITIES OF ALPINE COOPERATION

**We, the environment and transport ministers of the Alpine countries, commit to working together to make mobility in the Alpine region climate-neutral and climate-resilient by 2050 at the latest. We do so by jointly addressing the transport challenges that we face in the Alps.**

- (1) Underlining the fact that the detrimental effects of climate change due to rising CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, such as more frequent extreme weather events, natural disasters and the melting of glaciers, are becoming noticeable at a much faster rate and more dramatically in the Alps than in other regions in Europe;
- (2) Recognizing the fact that transport is one of the largest greenhouse gas emitters in the Alpine Space, with almost 30% of all greenhouse gas emissions, caused by passenger and freight transport;
- (3) Taking into account the particular challenges that crossing the Alps poses for seven of the nine European transport corridors;
- (4) Taking into account the specific characteristics of transport and mobility in the Alpine region, such as the transalpine transport of goods, cross-border commuting, mobility needs in remote regions, the requirements of tourist mobility and transport safety;
- (5) With regard to achieving sustainable balance between economic activity and the protection of the Alpine region by taking the modal shift, decarbonisation, and a more independent, secure and climate-neutral energy supply into account
- (6) Recalling our commitment made in the Paris Agreement to limiting global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius, preferably to 1.5;
- (7) Building on the Climate Action Plan 2.0, the Framework Convention as well as the transport and tourism protocols of the Alpine Convention;
- (8) Convinced that only a coordinated cross-border and Alpine-wide approach can help us achieve these goals in an efficient and effective way;
- (9) Following up our first joint ministerial conference on 14 January 2022;

we adopt this action plan for modal shift and decarbonisation of the transport sector in the Alps.

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Energie, Mobilität,  
Innovation und Technologie


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## 2. MODAL SHIFT AND DECARBONISATION OF THE TRANSPORT SECTOR IN THE ALPS

Together, we want to implement an ambitious modal shift and decarbonisation programme as well as improve the cross-border cooperation in the transport sector in the Alps. In order to do so, we commit to jointly pursuing the following approaches, which will help us achieve our goals:

### a. Pursuing the motto "avoid – shift – improve"

The greenest transport is the one that can be avoided entirely. In this regard, sustainable spatial planning has the potential to contribute greatly to the avoidance of traffic. In addition, individuals can contribute to reduced mobility and transport needs by working from home or remotely, favoring "shared mobility" and opting for other sustainable changes in their mobility and consumption behavior. As for the traffic that cannot be avoided entirely, it shall be shifted to environmentally and climate friendly modes of transport, primarily non-motorized modes as well as rail and other public transport modes. Where possible, especially in Alpine towns and in densely populated mountain regions, non-motorized transport should also be an alternative means of passenger transport. Remaining transport and mobility needs that cannot be avoided or shifted shall be improved by using zero-emission<sup>1</sup> technologies. Transport and logistics operations and the circular economy also still have great potential for efficiency improvement.

### b. Building on models of success together

At our first meeting of Ministers of Environment and Transport on January 14, 2022, we shared a wide range of national examples best practices and good measures. We commit to share these more widely through our existing joint cooperation bodies and to further develop and promote successful projects already underway. Consequently, we will further pursue transnational cooperation in order to implement good existing approaches across borders.

### c. Making the Alpine region a pioneer in alternative mobility models

Neue, innovative und digitale Lösungen sind erforderlich, um die Herausforderungen zu überwinden. New, innovative and digital solutions are needed to overcome the challenges and obstacles on the way to a decarbonized transport and mobility sector in the Alpine Space. Therefore, we will jointly implement model and pilot projects to accelerate the introduction of alternative and smart mobility models and make the Alpine Space a pioneer.

**We are convinced that with these approaches, we can make the transport sector in the Alps climate neutral and climate resilient by 2050 at the latest together.**

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<sup>1</sup> Particularly battery-powered electric vehicles (using electricity from renewable energy sources) and fuel cell electric vehicles (using green renewable hydrogen)

### **3. ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIETAL AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES**

By shifting to climate-friendly mobility, we are not only contributing to climate change mitigation but can also thereby reap diverse other environmental, societal and economic benefits:

For instance, the space that can be made available for the transport system is particularly limited in the sensitive Alpine space. Switching to public transport, active mobility or shared mobility can decrease land use and landscape fragmentation, which leads to fertile ground for the conservation of soil and leaves more space for Alpine ecosystems and biodiversity to flourish, develop and for their connectivity.

Moreover, people living in the Alps will profit from less noise and air pollution through road traffic and their health will benefit from active forms of mobility like walking and cycling.

Furthermore, by shifting from road to rail and through alternative fuels, we can reduce our external dependency on fossil fuels, make a significant contribution to increasing energy efficiency, and further promote the expansion of renewable energies.

## 4. ACTIONS IN THREE SECTORS OF ACTIVITY

Together we have identified three sectors of activity in which we can make a difference by working together among all Alpine countries, namely cross-border Alpine freight transport, cross-border passenger transport and tourism mobility. For each of them, we carefully define targets and actions that will help to achieve aforementioned. Alpine crossing freight transport is at the centre of our common efforts but cross-border passenger transport and tourism mobility, which plays an important role in the Alpine region, are also indispensable sectors of activity if we want to reach our goal of a climate-neutral and climate resilient transport sector.

In the implementation of the following actions, we will work together and involve each other in pilot and implementation projects to achieve a positive effect for the entire Alpine region. Additionally, we will assure mutual information about ideas, projects and experiences within the framework of the Alpine Convention and the Zurich Process and we will actively drive forward the work in our working groups where appropriate.



## 4.1 ALPINE CROSSING FREIGHT TRANSPORT

Modal shift in freight transport is a successful model as it is a priority decarbonization measure in the Alpine region and can use locally renewable energy sources. However, this requires the availability suitable rail infrastructure and services. Together, we will build on this model of success and shift freight transit transport from road to rail through good cooperation, innovation and coordination. We combine the modal shift approach with innovative technologies in order to considerably reduce emissions of heavy goods vehicles in the Alpine region and to achieve an efficient freight transport system.

**In the frame of this Action Plan, we, the environment and transport ministers of the Alpine countries, commit to**

*pursuing the following targets:*

1. Increase the overall efficiency of freight transport in the Alpine corridors, in order to significantly reduce unnecessary transports. Empty runs should be avoided as far as possible and the average utilization rate of road freight vehicles should be improved.
2. Considerably increase the modal split in rail freight traffic within the Alpine crossing.
3. Promote the introduction of zero-emission and carbon neutral trucks in Alpine transit corridors.
4. The planned revision of the EU Combined Transport Directive should provide appropriate incentives for shifting freight from road to rail, while at the same time ensuring that freight transport distances on road be kept as short as possible.

*by implementing the following actions:*

- » **Eurovignette meets Swiss HVF<sup>1</sup> – Implementation dialogue:** The launch of a dialogue about road tolls for heavy goods vehicles, by taking into account the measures of the revised Eurovignette Directive. The road toll should be better coordinated in order to strengthen the incentive for modal shift: The road toll should lead to a shift from road to rail and not to a redistribution between corridors.
- » **Differentiation of toll systems:** Strengthening the model character of the Alpine transit corridors by differentiating the toll systems for heavy goods vehicles based on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, according to the modalities foreseen in the revised Eurovignette Directive and by respecting the deadlines set for its implementation.

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1 Performance-related heavy vehicle charge

- » **Common approach towards promoting combined transport and related infrastructure (base tunnels, terminals, digitalisation):** Further development and improvement of our support systems for combined transport and the infrastructures required for it with the aim of promoting measures with real savings in external costs (taking into account all external effects relevant to the Alpine region, including the disproportionate impact in the sensitive mountain area).
- » **Additional incentives and infrastructure for zero-emission and carbon neutral-drive systems:** Creation of incentives for the use of vehicles with zero-emission and carbon neutral drives that go beyond differentiated tolls in order to decarbonize the remaining road freight transport. Efforts to provide the appropriate charging infrastructure for such new vehicles must be coordinated and promoted better.
- » **Promoting efficiency gains and interoperability:** Coordinate our efforts and advance pilot and demonstration projects to fully exploit the potential of digital tools and innovative technologies for rail freight: improved data exchange, new IT solutions, innovative transshipment processes, and technologies in combined transport terminals can improve capacity utilization.
- » **Coordinated approach towards capacity management in the Alpine transit corridors:** Pursuing a more coordinated approach to capacity management on Alpine transit corridors, with the aim of improving the capacity utilisation of these corridors (road and rail), in particular to make full use of the new railway base tunnels.

## 4.2 ALPINE AND CROSS-BORDER PASSENGER TRANSPORT

Shifting passenger transport to sustainable forms of mobility needs to take into account the specific challenges in the Alps related to cross-border (commuter) mobility and mobility needs in remote areas.

**In the frame of this Action Plan, we, the environment and transport ministers of the Alpine countries, commit to**

*pursuing the following targets:*

1. Considerably increase the modal split of public transport in cross-border commuter traffic in the Alpine area.
2. Reducing the volume of unsustainable traffic and promoting sustainable and active mobility, e.g. by encouraging changes in individual mobility and consumption behavior and targeted education and information measures.

*by implementing the following actions:*

- » **Enabling and improving cross-border travel information transfer:** Promoting existing and new pilot and model projects for international and multi-modal information in the Alpine Space in order to encourage the use of cross-border rail transport and non-private carpooling (car sharing).
- » **Alpine-wide ticketing solutions:** In cooperation with the territories concerned, work on the development of multi-modal tickets and ticketing systems for public transport valid in all or parts of the Alps, by evaluating existing tickets and testing them through pilot projects in cross-border regions.
- » **Decarbonization of public transport:** Efforts including support measures to decarbonize public transport by road and rail through the electrification of bus fleets and railroads on non-electrified routes with renewable energy or through the use of fuel cell trains (powered by renewable hydrogen).
- » **Long-distance travel:** Promotion of (night) passenger train connections between major European cities, also within and towards the Alpine region.
- » **Promoting the use of intelligent traffic management:** Launching pilot projects on intelligent traffic control, such as "Mobility Pricing", and exchanging experiences with other Alpine countries.
- » **Towards a green transport network:** The launch of a technology initiative and coordinated development of an infrastructure for zero-emission and carbon neutral technologies, including the expansion of charging infrastructure for electric vehicles – transition from a green corridor to a green transport network. »

- » **Reduction of commuter traffic:** Support of the promotion of mobility management programs and plans at national and local level, in companies (through mobility concepts and incentives) and in schools, by promoting work-smart models, e-bike sharing, e-car sharing, carpooling, traffic calming and demand-responsive public transport in the Alpine Space in order to reduce the mobility demand.

## 4.3 ALPINE TOURISM MOBILITY

Tourism as one of the most important sectors of economic activity in the Alps has a considerable importance for many Alpine municipalities. Mobility plays a big part in the climate-friendliness of a tourism destination, including the trip to go and back and mobility on site. Sustainable mobility solutions for leisure time for Alpine inhabitants are also needed.

**In the frame of this Action Plan, we, the environment and transport ministers of the Alpine countries, commit to**

*pursuing the following target:*

1. Considerable reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions related to tourism and leisure mobility in the Alpine region by making public transport and non-motorized mobility solutions to and within tourism destinations more attractive and accessible.

*by implementing the following actions:*

- » **Accessibility of tourist destinations:** Improvement of public transportation access to popular vacation and leisure destinations, e.g., from interregional rail stations and by ensuring "Last Mile" solutions to provide an alternative to individual road travel and improve modal shift.
- » **Promotion of non-motorized transport:** Supporting projects that promote non-motorized active mobility (cycling, walking) in combination with public transport as part of tourism programs and leisure activities, also focusing on senior citizens and young people.
- » **Facilitating climate-neutral travel in the Alpine region:** Promotion of comprehensive climate-neutral tourism offers, e.g. through awards or through a label/quality seal for CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral destinations. A substantial reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions is to be at the centre of all measures.
- » **Improvement of the infrastructure for cyclists and pedestrians:** Joint development, adoption, and implementation of national, regional, and local cycling and walking master plans to support active mobility, particularly through the establishment of funding and investment programs to rapidly expand and improve cycling and pedestrian infrastructure.
- » **Exchanges of experience on mobility concepts in tourist destinations:** Exchange of experiences with car-free destinations and e-mobility in tourist destinations and initiation of projects to promote the use of alternative technologies in tourism mobility. »

- » **Common vision for sustainable alpine tourism mobility:** Development of a common vision and tourism strategies for sustainable tourism mobility development in the Alps, which is focused mainly on tourists travelling by public transport and on shaping out way into the future.

## 5. FOLLOWING UP

We, the Ministers of Environment and Transport of the Alpine countries, commit ourselves to implement these measures and to monitor the progress achieved in the framework of the Alpine Convention and the Zurich Process. A pragmatic monitoring and information process is established to follow the implementation of the defined actions to reach the targets in the three sectors. Short implementation reports summarizing the efforts, good examples, results and, if possible, the measured impact of the measures can be presented to the future Alpine Conferences and at the meetings of the Ministers of Transport in the framework of the Zurich Process. In addition, we consider it useful to provide information on best practices and ongoing activities in order to stimulate exchanges, synergies and cooperation between all interested stakeholders in support of the implementation of this Action Plan.



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