



# Position Paper - EUSALP Youth Council

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The EUSALP Youth Council is an official body of the European Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP) that aims at building bridges to enact youth-led change in the Alpine region.

The Youth Council aims to represent the alpine youth, their ideas, and their opinions in EUSALP. Its mission is to bring the youth of the different alpine regions together and build a bridge between them and politics. The proposal of concrete political action to the EUSALP body as well as the direct implementation of projects are tasks of the Youth Council. The responsibilities of the Youth Council also include consultation with the Executive Board and the General Assembly of EUSALP as well as close cooperation with the nine action groups of the EUSALP, to ensure that the youth's voice is heard in the decision-making process. Finally, members of the Youth Council are invited to actively work in other projects within the EUSALP Youth framework (e.g. in the jury of the Pitch Your Project competition).

This position paper defines the priorities of the Youth Council's work. In the following, objectives, priorities and concrete projects are defined for each thematic group (TG) of the Youth Council, as well as the members of the respective TG are listed.



## TG 1: Economic Development

As youth councilors in the EUSALP Youth Council we can only note that for years many mountain countries in the Alpine Region have been experiencing a huge demographic decline and an increase in the average age: more and more young families are leaving the mountain to have more city facilities. Young people also leave the Alps and we have a duty at the level of the Youth Council to present the problem and find the possible solutions to be put in place.

We are aware that it is not a project with immediate feasibility, but if we do not start to promote a path, our future and the future of small mountain countries will be compromised. We want to investigate the possible implementation of adapted taxation within mountain areas and similar projects that could improve the attractiveness of the Alpine area, and we trust in the help of members of the AG2 to chart a path to follow.

### Aims and goals

- Search for positive examples of mountain countries that are fighting depopulation and promote the actions implemented.
- Improving the cooperation of the Alpine countries in order to give a clear voice to the problem of depopulation.
- Improve the attractiveness of the Alpine region for young adults and professionals.
- Collaboration with AG2 members to lobby on politics to expose the problem.

### Projects

- Create a network between small municipalities suffering depopulation (2021)
- Identify and quantify relevant depopulation data (2021)
- Carry out a survey on the specific needs of young people and good practices to enhance the attractiveness to live in the mountain area (Milano Event)
- Identify the possibility of innovative ideas to tackle depopulation with the Alps as a model region (e.g. temporary free Housing)
- Institutional collaboration in higher education to highlight skilled workers in alpine-specific industries and create a network between local companies and educational institutions

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## TG 2: Mobility and Connectivity

We know that transportation is one of the most important sources of greenhouse gas emissions in the European Union and in the Alpine Region. Therefore it is very important for us to be able to travel within the alpine region and limit our carbon footprint. However, we note that it is for the moment difficult to move without a car in a lot of mountain areas, and especially in the cross border regions due to the fact that the public transportation is under the responsibility of different stakeholders.

### Aims and goals

- Improving cooperation between all European stakeholders of mobility with the objective of an integrated network and to avoid waste of money and to make sustainable freight and public transportation attractive and efficient.
- Discuss the attractiveness of public transportation with mobility stakeholders and encourage youth targeted offers.
- Collect data about mobility in the Eusalp region to inform policies makers and alpine citizens about this topic.
- Support pitch your project initiative in relation with the mobility topic and help them to reach their goals,
- Encourage companies to at least partially fund public transport for their workers by showing the benefits of it
- Encourage the youth to use public transport as a means to visit the Alpine region.

### Projects

- Improve the efficiency of EUSALP events by providing a car sharing document and support for alternative journeys
- Work and discuss with the mobility stakeholders of the alpine region to know the main problems and explore the solution with a global vision
- Help the Alptick project in his implementation

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## TG 3: Environment and Culture

Energy and environmental issues are amongst the most crucial matters in the Alpine region today. How we create a more sustainable Alpine region that protects its natural and cultural heritage while pushing for an energy transition towards renewable energies in the face of climate change are part of the key challenges facing us today. As the Alpine region develops and deals with new challenges, the Alpine region's rich natural and cultural history must be maintained so that future generations can learn about their regions and appreciate their region to the full. Respectively, the youth have an important role in helping to shape the approach of the Alpine region in these areas, making it crucial that they are engaged with these topics. Thus, the role of TG3 and the EUSALP Youth Council is to further engage with the youth on environmental issues and the topic of cultural and natural heritage, in order to connect EUSALP's institutions with the voices of the youth in this regard.

### Aims and Goals

- Greater identification amongst the youth with their cultural and natural heritage
- Connecting the youth with environmental issues in the Alpine region
- Celebrating cultural diversity and heritage in our region
- Acting as a bridge between young people and experts on the themes of energy and the environment
- Cooperating with the EUSALP's Action Groups on the thematic area of Energy and Environment
- Promotion of sustainable practices and behaviors in harmony with the environment in the Alpine Region

### Projects

- Blog on environmental issues, and natural and cultural heritage (2021)
- Youth engagement events on energy and environment *focus topics* (2021)
- Combatting mountain waste through an information campaign (2021)
- Engaging schoolchildren with aquaponic systems
- All-on board for alternative food sources
- Work on an exchange-platform for cultural traditions
- Cultural exchange and awareness workshops
- Raise awareness about water solidarity in the Alpine area

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## TG 4: EUSALP Youth specific tasks and overarching projects

As active members in different local and international youth organizations and as youth councilors in the EUSALP Youth Council, we realized a loss of effectiveness in youth participation due to different reasons. There are different youth initiatives and organizations in the EUSALP region and beyond which all act separately facing their problems for themselves. We see the potential of synergies due to the same challenges and want to discuss how youth participation can work efficiently and impactful in EUSALP and in general.

### Aims and goals

- Improve cooperation and organization of youth initiatives in the alpine area
- Act as the interregional connection and point of contact for local youth initiatives (i.e. in terms of structure and topics)
- Raise awareness and educate young people about participation possibilities, current political issues – meet as equals, with humor and in-person
- Providing information about youth initiatives and offer to review proposals of (EUSALP) politicians

### Projects

- Information acquisition on existing youth initiatives in the Alpine area through a survey that is spread across the whole Alpine region and a common effort to collect and structure information on youth participation in the different Alpine countries.
- Creation of a network between local and interregional youth initiatives in the Alpine area enabling a better cooperation between youth initiatives and politicians
- Restructuring of the educational activities of Youth.Shaping.EUSALP and proposal of summer camp activities, workshops
- Development of a hitchhiking competition, open to young people living in the EUSALP area, with the aim of encouraging greater awareness of EUSALP's competences and the possibilities for active participation that are offered to young people by various projects and organizations. The competition also aims to foster a dialogue between the participating young people, which will end in an event organized at the conclusion of the competition.

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