

EU STRATEGY FOR THE ALPINE REGION (EUSALP)

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

QUESTIONNAIRE

Fields marked with * are mandatory.

The overall objective of the EUSALP is to promote sustainable prosperity in the Alps, by fostering its competitiveness and innovation capacities, improving connectivity in this Region, and preserving and promoting its environmental patrimony.

This public consultation on the EUSALP aims to reach not only any relevant stakeholder but all European citizens interested in this Region. Therefore, your ideas, comments and views become essential for the design and implementation of this Strategy. These will ensure the EUSALP be realistic in its starting point, appropriate in its goals and responsive to the real needs of this Region.

SECTION 1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Please specify in which capacity you are completing this questionnaire.*

- As an individual/private person
- On behalf of a public authority
- On behalf of an International Organisation
- On behalf of a civil society organisation
- On behalf of a private enterprise
- On behalf of an academic/research institution
- Other

2. Please provide your name, and where relevant, the name of your organisation.*

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3. If your organisation is registered in the Transparency Register, please indicate your Register ID number.

4. Please provide your country of residence/establishment.*

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| <input type="radio"/> Austria | <input type="radio"/> Belgium | <input type="radio"/> Bulgaria | <input type="radio"/> Croatia | <input type="radio"/> Cyprus |
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| <input type="radio"/> Spain | <input type="radio"/> Sweden | <input type="radio"/> United Kingdom | <input type="radio"/> Liechtenstein | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Switzerland |
| <input type="radio"/> Other | | | | |

5. Please provide your e-mail address*

thomas.egger@sab.ch

6. How well do you know the EUSALP?*

- Very well informed
- Fairly well informed
- Not very well informed
- Not informed at all

7. How well informed are you about the EU Macro-regional Strategies?*

- Very well informed
- Fairly well informed
- Not very well informed
- Not informed at all

SECTION 2 GENERAL FRAMEWORK

1. In your view, to further exploit the potential of the Alpine Region, what are the main topics on which co-operation should be fostered that cannot be addressed adequately at present?*

1,000 character(s) maximum

The main focus of EUSALP should be on

- increasing the economic competitiveness of the alpine area,
- improving the valorisation of alpine resources,
- improving accessibility of the alpine areas with a special attention to peripheral rural areas and
- improving urban - rural relationship.

2. Which are the main challenges, and what are the main concerns/obstacles to successfully addressing them?*

1,000 character(s) maximum

To our opinion, the main challenges are:

- access to markets (in urban areas), therefore the need to strengthen value chains and urban-rural linkages
- availability of attractive job opportunities, especially for young generations
- accessibility (physical and digital) of rural mountain areas
- the huge difference of territories within the core Alps, where potentially weak regions and economic growth poles like touristic resorts reside close together.

3. In terms of policies, which are most relevant? Which (EU) policies should be prioritised?*

1,000 character(s) maximum

We see the added value of a macro-regional strategy in the better coordination of existing policies at different levels. So this is not a question of prioritisation but of better coordination. A special challenge in the alpine context will be the coordination with the policies of the Non-EU-Memberstates (CH and FL).

4. In your view, how might the EUSALP improve the Alpine Region's ability to act on common challenges, and to exploit opportunities?

(Please specify some results you would expect from its implementation).*

1,000 character(s) maximum

EUSALP must help to create positive living conditions and a future for mountain people in the Alps. It must therefore contribute to increase employment and offer attractive jobs inside of the Alps. This does also require to work on topics like the (physical and digital) accessibility, services of general interest, the attractiveness of the landscape, protection of the environment etc.

5. In your view, what would be the benefits derived from the EUSALP at European level?*

1,000 character(s) maximum

SAB strongly advocates the cooperation of public authorities across massifs. This cooperation must include all relevant actors. EUSALP is the first model for a multilevel governance which was initiated bottom up, meaning by a joint process from regions and national authorities. This way, EUSALP can serve as model for other, future macro-regional strategies.

Furthermore, EUSALP should help to transport the message, that the Alps are an area full of innovation and live. The Alps are the living and working space for 15million persons. These persons want a perspective for their future work and live within the Alps.

SECTION 3. EUSALP SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

When considering the following questions, please note that the actions and projects to be proposed should:

- (a) concern the Alpine (Macro)Region;
- (b) have a positive impact on the citizens, enterprises, and the environment;
- (c) be feasible in the short or mid-term.

1. In your view, what are the main objectives on which the EUSALP should concentrate?
(Please indicate max. 3 objectives per Pillar)

Pillar 1. Fostering sustainable growth and promoting innovation in the Alps: from theory to practice, from research centres to enterprises.

at most 3 choice(s)

- Developing a joint Alpine Innovation and Research Strategy
- Networking of Research Centres and enterprises
- Structuring and strengthening existing and new co-operation platforms
- Developing Alpine added-value chains
- Raising awareness of financial tools and services
- Supporting SMEs
- Strengthen Economic Services of General Interest (ESGI)
- Stimulate an "Alpine Job Market"
- Strengthen the skills level and competencies of the workforce in the Alpine Region

Pillar 2. Connectivity for all: in search of a balanced territorial development through environmentally friendly mobility patterns, transport systems and communication services and infrastructures.

at most 3 choice(s)

- Improving common management of transport and mobility
- Promoting inter-modality (a more connected transportation network) and inter-operability (technical compatibility) for passengers and the use of common and public transport
- Promoting inter-modality and inter-operability for freight transport
- Promoting modal shift aiming to reduce transport negative impacts
- Sharing innovation process and devices across the Alpine Region in the field of sustainable transport
- Moving toward an Alpine "low carbon and low emission mobility system"
- Providing mobility options for all in times of demographic change
- Bridging the digital divide
- Improving accessibility to services and supply
- Strengthening mutual solidarity between people living in different areas in the Alpine Region

Pillar 3. Ensuring sustainability in the Alps: preserving the Alpine heritage and promoting a sustainable use of natural and cultural resources.

at most 3 choice(s)

- Promoting ecosystem services
- Developing transnational management schemes for protected areas (instruments and criteria)
- Ensuring ecological connectivity within the Alpine Region, and between the Alps and surrounding territories
- Developing agreements and planning instruments on regional scale about landscape development
- Establishing integrated watershed management systems
- Unlocking creative potential in the development of products and services, building on natural and cultural resources
- Fostering instruments and procedures to negotiate and balance the interest of energy production, nature protection and other land uses
- Increasing the sustainable use of biomass for renewable energy production
- Fostering energy efficiency and saving among others in the housing and mobility sector
- Mainstreaming the adaptation strategies into risk management
- Developing regional responses to climate and demographic changes

2. Are there others?

1,500 character(s) maximum

We're missing the following elements:

- A common effort to designate mountain products and protect their origin (according to the EU-regulation 1151/2012). This measure would be very important to increase the added value within the core alpine area (-> pillar 1)
- Diversification of mountain economies to reduce unilateral dependencies on branches like tourism or agriculture.
- Promoting the potentials of the residential economy.
- Encouraging regional economic circles.
- To better valorise the rich cultural heritage of the Alps (e.g. the Walser tradition) as an asset (-> pillar 3)
- To highlight the important role of regional development approaches (on an inter-municipal level), e.g. destination management organisations in the tourism sector, an intersectorial, territorial approach to services of general interest, the leader approach in rural development, the concept of energy-regions etc. (-> pillar 1)

3. Which of the objectives cannot be achieved under existing structures, and could be advanced through an integrated Macro-regional approach? (Please indicate max. 3 objectives per Pillar)

1,500 character(s) maximum

EUSALP must clearly focus on topics which are not yet covered by other alpine structures / organisations. Only in this case, EUSALP will provide an added value. E.g.: there's already a network of alpine protected areas. So it's useless, that EUSALP invests itself in that. Or another example: the topic of energy efficiency in the housing sector is something that relies within the competency of regions or even municipalities and should not be addressed by an international strategy.

The points that we've prioritised are largely not covered neither by the Alpine Space Programme neither by the Alpine Convention or other transalpine initiatives and deserve therefore special attention within EUSALP.

4. Please indicate concrete (EU, national, regional or local) actions or projects, which could contribute to achieve the objectives of the EUSALP in the short or medium term. (Please indicate max. 2 actions/projects per Pillar)

Pillar 1

Action/project 1:

3,000 character(s) maximum

Create a common platform of higher education institutions in the Alps and establish a dialogue between the scientific community and practitioners: inform students all across the Alps about the existing institutions (e.g. mountain university in Edolo, EURAC in Bolzano, Universitäre Fernstudien in Brig (CH) etc.) and education and training offers, increase the mobility of students, improve the skills of the students, exchange knowledge between the institutions, strengthen and disseminate alpine specific knowledge. All this in order to improve the perspectives for future generations and in order to increase knowledge within the Alps.

In order to transfer knowledge from science and in order to strive for a practice-oriented research responding to the real needs of mountain communities, a permanent dialogue between the scientific community and practitioners (public authorities but also representatives from various fields like NGO's chambers of commerce, farmers organisation, tourism organisations etc). shall be established. This could be done at a transnational level as well as at a national / regional level where appropriate.

Action/project 2:

3,000 character(s) maximum

Common actions by all partners to implement the new rules on mountain products in order to increase added value in mountain areas and in order to avoid misuses. These actions could encompass such activities as common workshop to share the existing experiences of the Swiss and French mountain products designations, of the organisation of the value chains along those designations etc. as well as retaliatory measures against the misleading use of mountain designations.

Pillar 2

Action/project 1:

3,000 character(s) maximum

Speed-up the rollout of fast broadband access in rural mountain areas: Although there's a digital agenda within the EU and although all member states have adopted national plans for broadband access, rural mountain areas are lagging behind in the accessibility to high-speed broadband. This creates a digital divide and reduces the attractiveness and competitiveness of rural mountain areas in comparison to urban areas. So the partners of EUSALP should agree on putting a top priority on the rollout of high-speed broad band in rural mountain areas and to provide appropriate services. The national and regional broadband-strategies should put an accent on this point and additional financial and regulatory support should be provided as far as needed.

Action/project 2:

3,000 character(s) maximum

Pillar 3

Action/project 1:

3,000 character(s) maximum

Payments for ecosystem services: Ecosystem services provided by mountain areas are often not adequately compensated. Some schemes exist like the water fees in Switzerland. These schemes have to be further developed and put into practice. This requires a strong accent in research on this field, an exchange of practice between the countries, regions and other stakeholders, an intense dialogue and finally a change in legislation where needed.

Action/project 2:

3,000 character(s) maximum

Promotion of knowledge for climate change adaption measures: A lot of knowledge exists for the causes and the mitigation of climate change. But in the field of adaptation good practises are sometimes lacking. Adaption is highly relevant for the regional and municipal level and various stakeholders such as tourism who may have to completely re-orientate their business-model. Various projects have been run under the alpine Space program. The project C3alps strives to capitalise those findings. Products will be amongst others a database on climate change adaptation strategies and actions as well a tool fro climate change adaptation in municipalities. A long lasting effect of theses outputs is needed with a concrete impact. EUSALP could help to assure this long lasting effect.

5. Any further comments

1,000 character(s) maximum

SPECIFIC QUESTIONS PER PILLAR

Pillar 1

6. What are the main remaining barriers to mobility of labour, students and ideas in the region?

1,000 character(s) maximum

Labour markets and studying courses are often organised in a national or regional rationale. Borders reduce transparency. The macroregional strategy through it's joint effort of all alpine countries and regions could help to cross those borders and to create common platform, a common labour and studying market.

7. What are the main challenges for the Alpine Region to remain competitive in the future?

1,000 character(s) maximum

The alpine economy is in a profound process of transformation. This transformation process is a big challenge. The process is not running at the same pace in all regions, territorial disparities therefore tend to increase, not only within the core Alps but also between the core Alps and the metropolitan areas. Territorial cohesion and the strengthening of the alpine economy are therefore more needed than ever. Strengthening urban-rural relationships and crossborder cooperations are elements of this.

Pillar 2

8. What are the main challenges for the Alpine Region in terms of connectivity?

1,000 character(s) maximum

The main challenges are in order of priority:

1. The digital accessibility (the rollout of highspeed-broadband being too slow in many mountain areas)
2. The inner-alpine accessibility by transport systems (meaning public and individual transport), it is often faster to travel from a mountain municipality to a metropolitan area, than to travel from one mountain area to another one within the Alps. This is not only a problem of transport infrastructure but also a problem of transport management systems. Alpine transport policy was for too long focussed on transalpine freight traffic. A new focus must be put on the inneralpine traffic.
3. The accessibility of Services of general interest (physical and temporal accessibility)

Pillar 3

9. What are the main challenges to ensure sustainability in the Alpine Region?

1,000 character(s) maximum

A lot is already being undertaken in this field through the Alpine Convention and other activities. The focus and added value of EUSALP should therefore be on the valorisation of resources. The main challenges are to

- increase the production of energy from renewable resources
- strive for a compensation for ecosystem services
- valorise the rich cultural heritage of the Alps

SECTION 4. EUSALP PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

1. In your view, why do existing co-operation mechanisms across national borders need to be improved in the Alpine Region? What are the barriers to co-operation that a Macro-regional Strategy should seek to overcome?

1,500 character(s) maximum

The two main transalpine co-operation mechanisms are the Alpine Convention and the Alpine Space Program. The Alpine Convention is an international treaty. It is not a multi-stakeholder and implementation orientated approach like a macro-regional strategy. The Alpine Space Programme is a powerful supporting mechanism, but it is not a strategic policy-making instrument. So the macroregional strategy can really fill a gap.

But at the same time it must strive to avoid duplicating what already exists. So there's for instance the "Suivi de Zürich", dealing with transalpine freight transport questions. There's no need for EUSALP to work on this topic as well.

What is really missing in the Alps is a joint effort by the alpine national and regional authorities to jointly work on concrete measures and to implement them. The indicator for the success of EUSALP shall not be the number of pages produced but the number of jobs generated. In this sense, EUSALP could really help to better coordinate public policies, actors from different levels and the multitude of ideas and good projects that exist in the alpine space.

2. How should the coordination of different (EU, national and regional) policies be managed? What governance structures should be envisaged in the Region to ensure the most effective coordination between the actors involved?

1,500 character(s) maximum

The future model of governance must make sure that it is truly a multi-level-governance. The lead and main initiative should remain within the regions, as they are mainly concerned with the direct implementation of policies. Coordination bodies should be composed conjointly of delegations from national and regional level. The EU should be associated actively to these coordination bodies. The representatives from the civil and the scientific society should have their say in the role as an observer.

3. Who would be the key actors concerned for better co-operation and coordination in the Alpine Region in the next years? Who should have ultimate responsibility for achieving results under the new Strategy, and who should the key decision makers be?

1,500 character(s) maximum

Main decision makers are of course coming from the public authorities. The multilevel-governance of EUSALP must make sure, that those authorities from all levels are adequately represented. The process for the elaboration of the strategy with the shared responsibility of national and regional authorities is the way to go forward. But for the success of the Strategy, it is also crucial that the civil society and the scientific community are also represented in the process. On the transnational level, this role must be carried out by Euromontana, the European mountain association. SAB is willing to continue it's active role as representative of the civil society focussing mainly on the economic development of the Alps within Switzerland and through Euromontana on the transnational level. .

4. Any further comments

1,500 character(s) maximum

The process for the elaboration of EUSALP was very fast. Regretfully, it did not take benefit from existing work in the alpine area like the strategy documents produced by the Alpine Space Program, the results of projects within this program or the work carried out by the Alpine Convention.

The question of the perimeter of EUSALP is for us not satisfactorily resolved. At the actual state, it is meant that EUSALP covers more or less the same perimeter as the Alpine Space Program, meaning that it includes also the big metropolitan areas outside of the Alps like Munich, Lyon and Milan. SAB considers the urban - rural relationship as one of the main priorities. So we're not opposed to this larger perimeter. But we request, that all actions carried out within EUSALP must have their positive impact in the core Alps and not outside. Financial support which is destined for mountain areas must not be deviated towards urban areas. Furthermore, the strengthening of urban-rural-relationships and the integration of the metropolitan areas outside the core Alps should not lead to new dependencies of the core Alps. The development model to be adopted for EUSALP must clearly focus on generating added value within the core Alps.

Background documents

EUSALP core document EN (/eusurvey/files/72652d1d-3745-4e47-9a63-2f621059e138)

EUSALP documento principale IT (/eusurvey/files/977ce07e-db7c-4ce7-8d17-a8625c650c84)

EUSALP temeljni dokument SL (/eusurvey/files/a2fb8a3b-122a-40f9-8abf-b94fcf565381)

EUSALP Kerndokument DE (/eusurvey/files/c2ca6ebc-ec0f-4d08-a1a7-b861a329b5a9)

EUSALP document principal FR (/eusurvey/files/aa313112-f19e-4b92-8230-40f55dd32dcd)

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