



Political resolution
towards a European Union Strategy
for the Alpine region

THE STATES AND REGIONS OF THE ALPINE REGION

Considering the article 3.3 Treaty on the European Union on the basis of which the economic, social and territorial cohesion is a goal of the European Union and the article 4 Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which states that it is a shared competence with the Member States,

Considering the article 174 Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, that recognises mountain regions among others as territories facing disparities, which require specific attention and actions in order to reduce those disparities,

In order to meet the objectives of a smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, in the context of the Europe 2020 strategy, and to contribute to a harmonious, sustainable development across the whole Union and its neighboring Regions and States,

In order to strengthen mutual solidarity between the territories, and to reduce disparities between the levels of development of the various regions, in accordance with the goals of the economic, social and territorial cohesion policy,

Taking into account the elements of analysis and recommendations from the European Commission report dated June 27, 2013, that note the success of the macro-regional strategies implemented in the Danube region and the Baltic sea region, including its contribution to the intensification of an interregional cooperation and the implementation of ambitious policies and projects in the fields of ecology, mobility and competitiveness,

Taking note of the European Parliament resolution of 23 May 2013 calling for a macro-regional strategy for the Alpine region and welcoming the bottom-up approach adopted by the regions of the Alpine area which have repeatedly expressed their desire to address effectively common challenges,

Considering that the Alpine region possesses exceptional natural assets, and provides a working and living space to a population attached to its territory, and that it also plays an economic role at a wider scale, providing goods and services in a sustainable way, such as tourism and recreation, transport corridors, academic cooperation, health, hydroelectricity, food, timber, handicrafts, for the whole of Europe,

Considering that the region also has to address challenges such as globalisation, fundamental structural changes in agriculture and tourism, de-industrialization, digital divide and limited access to services of general interest, climate change, urbanisation, and to cope with threats linked to the demographic changes and the ageing of its population,

Considering the speed with which these phenomena are occurring, worsening inequalities within the Alpine region and isolating more and more some of its territories,

Referring to the numerous initiatives towards a European strategy launched in the Alpine region in the last years and to the broad preparatory work accomplished since 2011 by the Regions, the member states of the Alpine Convention, and by the Alpine Space cooperation program, with many contributions from stakeholders in the regions, now converging into a joint and coherent initiative,

Acknowledging the “Intervention document” here enclosed as Annex A, as a result of a convergence between national and regional approaches.

HAVE ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION

The representatives of States and Regions of the Alpine region, gathered today in Grenoble, express their common will to support the elaboration of an EU strategy for the Alpine region.

They recommend that the European Council request the European Commission to launch the Strategy and the Action Plan preparation process with a view to its adoption during the Italian Presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2014, in accordance with the procedures for the preparation of the European Council.

They confirm that the purpose of the Strategy is to foster a harmonious and sustainable development for the Alpine region and to contribute to the goals of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth promoted by the European Union.

They share the ambition to strengthen mutual solidarity, within the macro-region, between mountainous areas and urban ones, between the Alps and surrounding regions, between declining territories and dynamic ones, between territories which provide amenities and those which make use of them. This “Solidarity Pact” will constitute a specific added-value of the Strategy.

They consider that enhancing attractiveness and competitiveness of the Alpine region and reducing social and territorial inequalities will benefit to the whole European area, since the Alpine region is a key European territory at the crossroads of different cultures, traditions and resources.

They declare that the Macro-regional Strategy is an integrating framework that will allow States, Regions and all relevant stakeholders and institutions, to develop cross-border strategic approaches, international projects, networking and cooperation to the benefit of the area as a whole.

They expect the Strategy to develop synergies between the various existing programs and focus on a limited and clearly defined set of priorities.

They suggest that the strategy be focused on the three following key thematic pillars, which have been broadly endorsed by the stakeholders:

- Ensuring sustainable growth and promoting full employment, competitiveness and innovation by consolidating and diversifying specific economic activities with a view to reinforcing mutual solidarity between mountain and urban areas

- Promoting a territorial development that is focused on an environmentally friendly mobility, reinforced academic cooperation, development of services, transports and communication infrastructures policy
- Promoting sustainable management of energy and natural and cultural resources and protecting the environment and preserving biodiversity and natural areas.

They suggest that the governance be based on the following principles:

- Ensure that the European Union Strategy for the Alpine region is implemented through various programs and instruments that organise and define the actions of the Alpine States and Regions, including in their cross-border and transnational cooperation,
- Associate all relevant actors to the definition of objectives and to the implementation of the selected projects,
- Mobilise the national, regional and local authorities, as well as the existing institutions and relevant civil society organisations,
- Ensure that the multi-level-governance approach and the principles of subsidiarity are implemented in order to carry out each specific action at the appropriate level,
- Invite the European Commission to play the role of an overall strategic coordinator.

They acknowledge that the implementation of the Strategy is based on the principle of no new EU funds, no additional EU formal structures, and no new EU legislation, while relying on a coordinated approach, synergy effects and more effective use of EU funds and other financial instruments and funds.

The signatories agree that the French government, in close consultation with them, shall submit this resolution to the European institutions.