

# **Resolutions of the Youth Parliament of the Alpine Convention (YPAC) 2010 in Rosenheim**

## **Committee 1: “How can a social balance be found for the Alpine society in the future?”**

### **Resolution 1**

1.1 Problem: Integration of minorities in Alpine countries

1.2 Plan: Integration can only be achieved in cooperation with local organisations, formed by immigrants who have already successfully integrated into the society and as well as inhabitants who would serve as a role model for less tolerant inhabitants. Different kinds of compulsory workshops will be organised where immigrants learn about local culture, religion, tradition and politics. This will help to broaden their minds and their knowledge about other cultures. It is also important that immigrants learn how the local educational program is built up. Such workshops include the offer to teach immigrants to write a job application to enable them a full integration in our society.

Representatives of each field will be present and give immigrants a background. Language courses will be offered to those, who have not had the chance to learn the respective language. Also present at the workshops will be already integrated adherents of the respective minorities, who act as hosts and if required as translators.

These workshops will be carried out by inhabitants as well as successfully integrated immigrants who would work as volunteers. Furthermore, workshops will be free of charge for participants.

All children in school will have to attend classes concerning ethics and state education. In this subject children will receive the same basis as their parents, but adjusted to their level of comprehension. Immigrant children will have to attend additional language classes for a faster integration in communication.

1.3 Actors: Schools, governmental organisations, representative organisations of immigrants, volunteers.

1.4 Justification: It is important that the family is integrated as a whole, that is why we will be acting on two levels: the youth and the adults. The classes proposed would be compulsory, as it is absolutely essential for the immigrants to realize the importance of knowledge about the country of immigration. They should also be shown that the spectrum of knowledge offered (political and educational system as well as the cultural background) acts as an advantage, as it makes exploitation of the immigrants in question hardly possible.

### **Resolution 2**

2.1 Problem

Integration includes two aspects: Firstly that the immigrants are ready to be integrated and secondly that locals become open-minded and allow the immigrants to be part of the society. Sadly, the majority of the inhabitants of the Alpine regions have a hostile attitude towards immigrants.

2.2 Plan

A campaign will be launched, which furthers the intercultural dialogue. This campaign, which is supportively initiated by the government (municipals), has the aim to fight against

discrimination and prejudice. With the intention to introduce the foreign cultures events such as fairs, markets and discussion rounds are organised. This will take the attention of the media and make people aware that immigration in case of integration can be a chance and not a punishment. As a result of globalisation and modernisation it is necessary to use all social and media-platforms for advertisement. Apart from this, voluntary organisations must be motivated to signify and support this project.

### 2.3 Actors:

Department of integration, social organisation and/or embassies, volunteers and people with immigration background

### 2.4 Justification:

Making people be confronted with foreign cultures at such events will change the hostile way of thinking towards immigrants. Due to the temporary one-sided focus on the unachieved examples of integration, it is necessary to stress mainly on the positive aspects of what immigration can bring.

The duration of this campaign is limited to the point, until the now existing prejudices and fears of immigrants have disappeared.

## **Committee 2: “How can the decrease of the young population be prevented in the rural Alpine society of the future?”**

### **1. Employment**

#### 1.1 Problem:

More and more young people are deciding to leave the rural Alpine areas due to a lack of diversity of the job market and a general lack of highly qualified employment opportunities with salaries competitive with the ones in other areas. A lot of modern-day jobs rely upon specific tools of trade that are hard to attain in the rural areas, such as broadband internet connection.

#### 1.2 Plan:

In order to keep sustainable employment and not to harm the environment, we would, on the one hand, continue to support existing sectors like organic agriculture, and on the other, subsidizing companies coming to the region. The regional development depends on rising, modern branches, like biotechnology together with research, which we would support further. Research centers would be built with states' financial assistance in order to accommodate local research work on the area in the area and from which the area would have additional benefits; specifics on spatial planning would be up to regional/municipal governments. Furthermore, we would, with financial assistance/lower taxes, promote home offices; also by improving information-exchange technology (e.g. a broadband internet connection) and providing better infrastructure. To support companies in their operations in the rural areas, a new mark of quality for the "Product of the Alps" (PoA) would be introduced, helping them with marketing of products made there/services provided as well as making the area more attractive to investors.

#### 1.3 Actors:

State government in association with municipal/regional governments.

#### 1.4 Justification:

By putting the above-stated plan into action, we promote the preservation of authentic traditions and cultural implications by motivating young people to continue living in their

home community, keeping their identity, through providing employment options (with high qualifications) for them locally and affirm the sustainable development and preservation of the environment through preferring fields with little or no negative consequences to the environment, but rather beneficial to it through continuing research into the specifics of the region and thus enabling us to take better caution of our actions; furthermore also reducing transportation/everyday commutes to the cities due to home office promotion.

## **2. Services**

### **2.1 Problem:**

Lack of accessibility of services (healthcare, public transport, basic education, leisure-time activities, telecommunications, energy supply etc.) in the rural areas is the cause for many young people leaving the countryside in favour of a life in urbanized areas with better infrastructure and easier access to the aforementioned services.

### **2.2 Plan:**

In order to maximize availability of leisure time and social-life activities, we would provide cheaper or free and easily accessible public transportation (even during night-time). By providing broadband internet access to remote locations (via satellite and using alternative energy sources if necessary), we would introduce an innovative teaching program (e.g. via Skype, similar to the one in the Australian outback). In order to make healthcare in remote areas better, we would have doctors near by. In addition, better road maintenance is also important.

### **2.3 Actors:**

State government in association with municipal/regional governments.

### **2.4 Justification:**

Providing around-the-clock public transport services in rural areas would make those areas a lot more interesting to the young adults, deciding whether they are going to stay in their native areas, maintaining the culture and traditions of the area and still enjoying many of the comforts of the urban life. Less environmental damage is implied by new transport possibilities. Broadband internet access would simplify teaching and social connectivity in very remote regions and thus make living there easier especially for families with children enabling them to live there and still maintain a modern lifestyle, providing the children with an essential basic education. Subsidizing alternative energy sources would provide a service of similar importance. Easily accessible healthcare through free home-visits of doctors would provide a greater degree of safety to the inhabitants of those areas. Therefore, more young people/families would stay or return to their home communities, enjoying a safer life.

## **Committee 3: “How should water be used as a natural resource?”**

### **Resolution 1**

#### **1.1 Problem:**

Not enough measures are taken to promote the saving of water, as substantial amounts of water can be recycled and fresh water can be saved to a much greater extent. Some areas within the Alpine regions are arid due to human impact on rivers for generation with hydropower plants thus in need of water that has to be transported from other areas.

### 1.2 Solution:

The amount of information in newspapers, on the TV and education about measures to save water has to be increased in the Alpine region.

Research on innovative and eco-friendly technology (for agriculture/ sewage plants/ industry) is needed to prevent the waste of water and use the amount of water more cleverly.

Renewable energy is important but in arid areas rivers should not be lead to dams to insure enough water for all people. Therefore plans for areas which are suitable for building hydropower stations should be made.

The regions should work together in order to make water more available in arid areas through transport and we support the research in the field of transport.

### 1.3 Actors:

The information on effective water use is provided through the media and education.

Country governments in cooperation with the permanent secretariat of the Alpine Convention form several groups with experts.

National governments supported by experts at the Alpine Convention must work on these plans and supervise the owners and users of the hydropower plants.

The government must assure constant distribution in all areas

### 1.4 Justification:

Our whole generation has to face many future problems of which effective use of water is one of the most important ones. Water is not just an average product, but a valuable good nobody can live without. As the governments are representatives of their nations it is up to them to do awareness rising and help people to change their habits. The best way to reach whole nations is through media like TV, newspapers, etc., but also advertisements.

On the other hand we need to improve our knowledge on technology to reduce our bad impact on nature now and to be prepared for all scenarios in the future.

Being gifted with enough water at the moment does not give us the permission to waste it. It is our task to think eco-friendly and future orientated. Hydropower is a great source of energy but we can produce power in other ways while hydropower plants reduce our drinking water and we can not take it from somewhere else. Foreseeing a possible lack of water due to climate change the next few years, we should exploit water in more indispensable ways.

Due to an imbalance in allocation of water we feel that it is necessary to transport it from water rich regions to arid ones. For all the above reasons this committee believes that the solutions it suggests will help us solve future and present problems.

## **Resolution 2**

### 2.1 Problem:

In light of future changes on our sensitive water balance we need to create new plans how good access to water can be guaranteed for everybody. It is uncertain if public water management we use today, will be suitable in 50 years or if privatization is the better solution.

### 2.2 Solution:

Because of the risks of private water management, water should be managed publicly. Public water management has its disadvantages regarding the quality of the water and system that is too independent. This is why a supervisor/ adviser must be introduced in order to ensure that the water meets certain standards and that the population is informed.

### 2.3 Actors:

The individual governments manage, store, distribute and if necessary clean the water available in the corresponding state. Concerning the quality of water the Alpine Convention

acts as a safeguard monitoring the water, through advice and proposals to attempt to guarantee clean drinking water in all Alpine regions.

#### 2.4 Justification:

We expect governments to speculate on water less than what a private company would do so that quality and price will be optimized and the water will be available for everybody.

Water is one of the most important goods of the future which means that profit orientated companies try to take over control of Alpine water systems. The advisors provide an additional benefit because they ensure better water quality as would competition in a privately managed system.

### **Committee 4: “How can people in alpine regions make use of rivers and lakes?”**

#### **1. Development of summer tourism**

##### 1.1 Problem:

Winter tourism is the most important economic factor in the Alps. Regretting the fact that recently climate change is causing problems which can risk our future economy, ecology and social life, and the increase of exploitation of nature that abuses our resources will cause problems in the future as well. With that background we have to focus on summer tourism which leads to rivers and lakes that can be turned into main tourist attractions in Alpine regions.

##### 1.2 Plan for improvement:

For the development and increase of summer tourism, we encourage the opening of new touristic areas in order to free principle touristic areas from pressure caused by a disproportionally large amount of tourists and advertising in order to attract the people. We keep environmentally friendly summer-tourism and renaturalisation as a main objective, being aware that an intact nature is the capital for a good economy in most Alpine regions. In terms of renaturalisation, we are for the restoration of rivers in order to bring them back to their natural conditions by cleaning up rivers, freeing obstructed passages and giving back space to wetlands.

We support advertising of touristic localities nearby rivers and lakes by setting up a common webpage on summer tourism on which it will be possible to find information about the different locations, traditions, local products and how to behave environmentally friendly there. We would do this in order to make Alpine regions more attractive as a summer vacation destination.

##### 1.3 Actors:

In order to achieve our solutions we invite the following international organisations to improve their contribution increasing cooperation to our scope:

Parliament of the Alpine Convention, CIPRA

CNR (Compagnie Nationale du Rhône)

EU Water Framework Directive

Local authorities and NGOs

##### 1.4 Justification:

Our resolution deals with the importance of eco-friendly measures based on the fact that if we treat our environment well, we will benefit socially and economically in the future.

Furthermore it is our task to be concerned with maintaining well preserved Alpine rivers and lakes which are the capital for prosperous summer tourism that will be able to compete with

the touristic business in winter. Finally, we should not forget that preserving our environment is our duty for the simple fact that we do live in this region and we are in dept with it.

## **2. Improvement of hydropower plants in the Alps**

### **2.1 Problem:**

Energy is making the world go round. Due to the fact of increasing energy demand and that 90% of water energy which comes from Alpine rivers and lakes is already used, we identify increased use of energy as a problem nowadays. Furthermore we see this problem on two different levels where we should focus on finding a proper solution with respectful view on water ecology. Therefore our goal is to find a balance between costs, utility and environment.

### **2.2 Plan for improvement:**

Meeting good environmentally friendly standards for hydropower plants can be achieved by protecting animals, for example by creating and widening of fish passes making impairments and revitalisation campaigns of natural watercourses that suffer because of the construction of hydropower stations.  
supporting further research on how to make hydropower plants more eco-friendly

As we have recognized a great quantity of already existing hydropower plants we propose to focus on a subject of developing to their greatest potential on two following points:

We propose the drawing up of an updated handbook report which should contain Rules and laws in order to clarify and give a stronger role to the restrictions to the construction of hydropower plants in the Alps

A pre-planning map to distinguish between qualified and non-qualified areas from the building of new hydropower plants

We support the introduction of a team of experts cooperating with each other which should be divided into researchers and up keepers

### **2.3 Actors:**

In order to achieve our solutions we invite the following international organisations to improve their contribution increasing cooperation to our scope.

Parliament of the Alpine Convention

JRC (Joint Research Centre of the European Commission)

ISCAR (International Scientific Committee on Research in the Alps)

Local ministries of environment

EU Water Framework Directive

### **2.4 Justification:**

Through the development of already existing hydropower plants as well as investing in renewable, eco-friendly energy sources, we could be competitive with higher energy demand arising from our society. Furthermore we strongly believe that our solutions will contribute with new water knowledge that can ensure our safe energetic future.