



YPAC 2011

Final Resolutions

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Committee 1 Freight and industrial traffic.....	2
Resolution 1.1 - Imagine the Alps without traffic	2
Committee 1 Freight and industrial traffic.....	3
Resolution 1.2 - Let's unify railways!.....	3
Committee 2 Public Transport	4
Resolution 2.1.....	4
Committee 2 Public Transport	6
Resolution 2.2.....	6
Committee 3 individual transport	7
Resolution 3.1.....	7
Committee 3 individual transport	9
Resolution 3.2.....	9
Committee 1 & 4 Freight and industrial traffic & Health, environment and traffic.....	11
Resolution 4.1 - An Alpine Crossing Exchange for the Alpine region!.....	11
Committee 4 Health, environment and traffic.....	12
Resolution 4.2.....	12

COMMITTEE 1

FREIGHT AND INDUSTRIAL TRAFFIC

RESOLUTION 1.1 - IMAGINE THE ALPS WITHOUT TRAFFIC

Committee number 1 identifies as a main problem that there is already too much industrial traffic in the Alpine regions and that is very likely to increase in future. We see that the status quo interferes with sustainable development of these regions and therefore, solutions should concern the reduction of industrial transport in Alpine regions.

We urge you, ministries of transport, environment and health, CIPRA, Alpine Convention, EU commission, EU parliament and local governments to work towards our goals.

Problem: Unnecessary transport!

Unnecessary transport is in its essence unnecessary and occurs only in search of smaller costs and higher profits because of cheaper workforce in other states, lorries that are not fully loaded and only one-way transportation.

Solutions:

Firstly, governments of the Alpine states should impose higher tolls for all the industrial transport and even an additional one for the inefficiently loaded lorries. Furthermore, we ask the EU to encourage more cooperation between firms from different countries that are dealing with import and export of certain goods in order to reduce industrial transport. They should give a financial incentive to the ones that cooperate to reduce traffic.

Secondly, national governments should subsidise the production of national products in order to decrease the number of trucks since consumers will tend to buy local products that are going to be cheaper due to subsidies. The EU has to raise awareness by putting a sign on products with an indication of how many kilometres they were transported and advertise its true meaning.

Justification:

In order to reduce emissions and traffic jams and to finance government's expenses on the maintenance of roads we urge different institutions to take a step towards creating a sustainable and environmentally friendly transportation system.

COMMITTEE 1

FREIGHT AND INDUSTRIAL TRAFFIC

RESOLUTION 1.2 - LET'S UNIFY RAILWAYS!

Problem:

The problem can be found in different systems of railways, which discourages companies from using railways as a means of transport. The switching from one system to the other costs too much money and time (changing trains/containers). This problem arises from the lack of cooperation between the countries of the Alpine region.

We urge you, ministries of transport, EU, representatives of the Alpine Convention and local governments to work towards our goals.

Solutions:

We want governments to financially support the research made on the development of a new unified railway system that is going to be the same in all countries of the Alpine region. We, later on, strongly encourage the EU to assist governments in financial terms or in any other manner.

Furthermore, cooperation between different international railway companies is required to find the best and quickest solution.

Justification:

Suggested measurements aim at increasing the amount of freight transferred on rails opposite to roads. Transportation is going to be faster and more efficient since no extra time or money are going to be spent on changing of railway systems between countries.

COMMITTEE 2

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

RESOLUTION 2.1

Problem:

In times that are dominated by research and discussions on climate change one single car that transports 4 people loads as much green gas emissions as one bus and three time more as a car that is only driven by a single person.

This leads our focus on public transportation that has been becoming less demanded during the last decades due to its declining efficiency, which has persuaded people to choose individual transport.

The problems are shown in different contexts, such as decreasing frequency and other obstacles of public awareness like the unreliability, which includes many delays and fragmentary connectivity in the Alpine countries. A big problem that should also be taken into consideration concerns the discomfort in public means of transport including overcrowded busses and trains and missing cleanness.

Solution:

The committee on Public Transport of the YPAC 2011 would like to address our resolution to the Alpine Convention, regional and national governments and transport services.

We consider the following measures as necessary:

It is needed to adapt the organization of means of transport to the people's daily needs, for example based on rush hours in regard to school and work.

The possibility of providing transport means for workers should be taken into considerations from the companies, because the same system could be used by students.

Another improvement that should be made in order to make transportations faster and more efficient is an equal accessibility of public transportation in every region, depending on the local landscape.

In order to make the mentioned type of transportation more popular, it is wise to improve the comfort and condition of the means: first of all the cleanness of trains and busses must be guaranteed; secondly an improvement of the services, such as the quality and possibility of meals, toilets and other useful devices for the daily means would make the public transport system more attractive.

Furthermore the efficiency of the public means would improve thanks to a better interconnection between bus and train services. This improvement also leads to a decrease of temporary issues, such as a long waiting time between the two transport means.

Justification:

In order to meet people's demands and wishes concerning public transport system, this committee considers the mentioned solutions as the most suitable ones because they are integrating the issue of environment, efficiency and attractiveness.

The mentioned problems at the beginning like for example lack of efficiency and comfort could be solved by ensuring a higher quality of the public transport system.

COMMITTEE 2

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

RESOLUTION 2.2

Problem:

Private cars are the most common mode of transport because of the people`s prejudices on public transport and due to their habits and mentality. Nowadays the car is fulfilling the function of a status symbol. Another point, which makes the car seem irreplaceable, is the fact that public transport is considered uncomfortable, unreliable and is regarded as being of lower quality.

Solution & Actors:

To solve these problems our committee suggests changing the attitude and behaviour towards public transport. The following steps have to be taken by the Alpine Convention, the local and national governments and public transport providers.

Since there is a lack of information on latest habits we ask the Alpine Convention to convince the governments to do research on this issue in the whole alpine region, especially in the peripheral areas.

Additional we want local schools, starting from primary grades, to organize workshops educating the students about ecological and economical benefits of using public transport.

In order to convince children of using public transport it is important that schools provide a good example. They have to give every child the chance to come to school by public transport on time. They can do so by organizing transport (in association with local public transport providers) for the children in the morning and in the end of a school day.

Furthermore it is necessary to make public transport more popular by promoting it. A good way of doing so is by cooperation of public transport providers and companies such as shopping centres, cultural institutions and sport facilities. One possibility would be the combination of a free return-ticket by buying a cinema-ticket or a bill of a shopping centre.

Justification:

With these “soft” measures we are creating a sustainable system instead of shifting the problem. People should not rely on old habits, because the environment is changing and so are we. This resolution focuses on education because of its importance for rising a new generation aware of the impact of transport. On the other hand innovative offers for the others must not be forgotten.

Over all the future of our sensitive environment is put into our hands and we have to protect the Alps by the long but necessary process of changing people`s habits and behaviour.

COMMITTEE 3

INDIVIDUAL TRANSPORT

RESOLUTION 3.1

Problem:

Individual Transport is a threat to the environment of the Alpine region and to its inhabitants. Because of a lack of information and advertisement we, as citizens of Alpine countries, see ourselves obliged to travel by car. As most of us live in valleys, the pollution, caused by the individual transportation implies a bigger impact to society and nature as it sticks between the mountains. Although alternative modes of travelling like car sharing or public vehicles are given, the citizens don't use them since comfort and information are missing.

Solution:

In order to insure a comfortable way of being informed, an international nonprofit platform connecting every kind of ecological transportation possibilities should be designed. The option between the vehicles would be:

Public transport (train, bus, underground, tram, ...)

Individual transport (car-sharing, bicycles)

By choosing departure, destination and the amount of vehicles that are acceptable for the user, as well as date and time, different options and combination will be given, which can be ordered by duration, price and eco-compatibility in emission-percentage. There also is the possibility to contribute to the environmental protection by paying a small fee (voluntary, though) which will be donated to an NGO using it to support nature conserving projects, for example fighting the deforestation.

The final booking information contains every ticket plus phone- and plate numbers for the car-sharing system. In case the destination is a big city, the website also provides information about the bicycle-rental-system.

The website is international and it therefore shows connections between all Alpine countries.

To be promoted the website should be linked with Facebook and Twitter.

Actors:

The website should be organized in corporation of every institution owning transportation systems in the Alpine region, which are financing the monthly fees of the administrators.

We name the NGOs as actors and thus supporters since they can use the (voluntary) donations to conserve and rebuild the environment.

The most important actors are the individuals that make our website work, either actively by offering car-sharing or donating or passively by using the website.

Justification:

We are all facing the fact that unnecessary individual transport damages our Alpine environment therefore it is of high importance to realize that the use of alternative ways of transportation is indispensable. Our website would help people to travel more comfortable and faster and maybe to get in contact with public transport for the first time. Furthermore it is advertisement for the different traffic institutions.

Although these kinds of websites already exist our aim is to connect every Alpine country and every transportation mode, especially car-sharing. Airplanes are not included as they do not provide eco-friendly traffic.

Furthermore, a successful use of the website would make people more environmentally-minded and conscious which is a very important point of future living.

Besides, the internet plays such a big role in everyday life, we believe, that it is the best form of advertising and promoting information and of getting directly in touch with the individual.

Thus we are sure that this innovative form of an international connection can be very sustainable and helpful both for nature and society.

COMMITTEE 3

INDIVIDUAL TRANSPORT

RESOLUTION 3.2

Problem:

Since our goal is to maintain our cultural and architectural heritage, you can see that the preservation of historic city centers in the Alpine region is a crucial factor. Thereby individual traffic in the aforementioned areas presents a great issue as it creates an unsuitable environment for both the inhabitants and the legacy itself.

Solution:

After a lot of debate, we found that the best solution to the problem in the current situation would be to ban motor vehicles from city centers and substitute them with a more ecological alternative. From our point of view, this would mean that the traffic in city centers and historical cultural sites would consist merely out of environmentally-friendly means of transport, in our case these being rental bikes as well as electrically powered “cars” with an optional “pedal drive” (A lightweight car-shaped vehicle propelled via an electric motor and bicycle-like pedals, with luggage room available). They would be rented through a Moneta-like system (a widely used cell phone based pay system in Slovenia) and RFID (Radio-Frequency IDentification) cards. The bikes would be distributed at stations spread throughout the “no-pollution” areas. In this way, it is easy for people to travel through the centers without being bound to a single location. With the “e-cars” in circulation and motor traffic banned, a lot of parking spaces would be liberated and consequently made available for other uses (e-car storage, parks). As a result, not only the particle and gas pollution would be eliminated, the noise pollution levels would also be decreased.

There has to be time slots for lorries to transport goods into the city. Emergency vehicles, as firetrucks, ambulances and police cars, are allowed to drive at any time. There should be a special transport possibility for elderly and / or disabled people.

Actors:

We believe that such a system must be implemented by local governments, but should definitely be also funded by the state itself, as it is in its own interest. We also suggest partnership with mobile phone companies responsible for the up-keeping of the network used by the rental service .

Justification:

The rental system works based on the following principles:

- The bikes and cars are outfitted with locks, which are equipped with RFID and mobile phone sensors and are also connected to the internet via GPRS/UMTS data transport network/protocol, relying upon existing infrastructure (cell phone towers), thus reducing the costs.

- Upon swiping the card or the phone over the lock, it connects with the central server through the aforementioned network, verifying its user and sending information and fees to the respective institutions.
- Upon successful verification the lock is released, enabling the people to use the respective vehicle.
- An amazing characteristic of this system is that it is completely pollution-free, due to the fact that it is powered merely by ecological energy sources. We propose solar and fuel cell based vehicles with a battery backup, not to forget human power.
- There are several projects, similar in concept, a particular inspiration was the “Bike rental system Biel” project, which has so far been proven extremely effective in reducing emissions.

As we previously mentioned, we would encourage cooperation with cell phone carriers for the connection to the central server, because in that case we could emit the signal through the cell phone towers. It is absolutely crucial that such a project is put into action as soon as possible to prevent further contamination of the environment and the degradation of living conditions in impacted areas, not to mention the negative effect on the cultural and architectural heritage, thereby making a similar project almost a necessary improvement. Due to the principles of the concept itself (being cost effective, easy-to-use, simple to install), we believe that such an initiative should be up and running within the timeline of 5 years.

Last, but not least, such a program is capable of functioning within every city, therefore, we recommend that it also be implemented throughout not only the Alpine region, but also throughout the whole European continent.

COMMITTEE 1 & 4

FREIGHT AND INDUSTRIAL TRAFFIC & HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT AND TRAFFIC

RESOLUTION 4.1 - AN ALPINE CROSSING EXCHANGE FOR THE ALPINE REGION!

Problem:

Committees number 1&4 are convinced that the today's amount of traffic in the Alpine region is too high and is very likely to increase in the future. With an outlook to the expected environmental, infrastructural and financial problems caused by traffic and especially lorries we urge the Alpine countries and the Alpine Convention to implement the system of an Alpine Crossing Exchange throughout the region of the Alps.

Solution:

To achieve this aim a market for permission rights to transport through the Alps has to be introduced. The number of permissions should be limited on an environmentally acceptable level. The number of permission should be set by the alpine states in coordination by the Alpine Convention and should be reduced progressively from today's number to the desired level. The transit rights can either be used by their owners or be freely traded.

Additionally the Alpine states should introduce incentives in order to make environmental friendly ways of transport more attractive. For example additional permissions for companies which shift their freight from road to rail And in order to limit the amount of emissions the Alpine region should introduce stricter restrictions for lorries. The permits are valid for only a certain amount of time, not exceeding a period of 15 months, to avoid financial speculation. Dealing with the permits will only be possible through governmental "middle-organizations" to gain control over the trading,

Justification:

The Alpine valleys are even more affected by noise and pollution issues, because of their special topographical situation. By implementing a system like this we would achieve two things. First there would be less traffic on the now a days overcrowded streets and therefore less Emission and secondly the raised money could be used for improving railway systems.

COMMITTEE 4

HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT AND TRAFFIC

RESOLUTION 4.2

Problem:

While discussing environmental and health issues in the Alpine regions, we always got stuck when we took a closer look on the impact of the economy. Therefore the same question came to our minds over and over again: **Why does economy always stand over environment and health?**

Every country has signed various contracts, promising that they will cut down emissions, or take other measures for sustainable environment and health policy. But until now they have never stuck to it, although the consequences on our health and our environment are well known and scientifically proven.

We want the priority of environmental and health questions to be at least on the same level as economy.

Solution:

There needs to be a new set of commissions. A local one, which takes care of measurements, elects representatives for the international commission, works out new ideas for improvement, and is approachable by every individual. And also an international one, which is responsible for the rating, which will be explained later. It should consist of representatives from every country. Scientists, people from universities, and other specialists, who will be elected by the people.

Every decision regarding environment and health has to be approved by this special commission.

They will be allowed to give out ratings for the countries in terms of environment and health, related to transport by judging their momentary behaviour and their fulfillment of the signed contracts.

The rating system is closely related to the distribution of permits. The consequence of not fulfilling the promised requirements and not taking action in the accordance with the actual environment policy will lead to less permits being available for distribution.

The commission starts rating the country xy on the following aspects:

- Momentary behaviour like emissions, improving public transport, improving infrastructure, working on innovations (alternative sources of energy, etc.)
- Degree of contract fulfillment

Individual environmental aspects

Imagine they get the best rating (100), the government will be given 100% of the permits they can possibly get for about 12 months later, which is defined as 1 period, and thus the permit system comes into action.

In case they get a worse rating (p. ex. 80) they will be given only 80% of their whole number of permits. Now they have 1 period to improve their behaviour. If they changed in a good way, they will get a better rating 12 months later and therefore more permits again.

The percentage and the rating are determined by an index from 1-100, with its corresponding percentages.

Justification:

Although we know that our ideas might sound utopian, we wanted to point out that there IS a different approach possible. We made an attempt to at least try it for once.