

# alpMedia Newsletter No. 2/2020

## More Alpine protection against transit traffic



Transit traffic: CIPRA representatives of all Alpine countries demand more binding rules.

The transport ministries of the EU countries will negotiate more binding rules for transit traffic at the beginning of June 2020. CIPRA representatives from all the Alpine countries are calling for an improvement in the European infrastructure costs directive for truck transport.

The CIPRA organisations formulated their general demands on transit traffic at the end of May 2020 with the aim of promoting the interests of people and nature in the Alpine region and advancing the protection of the Alps along the transit axes. Now they are also submitting their specific demands for improving the infrastructure costs directive to national environment, transport and health ministers.

### Toothless regulation

As early as 1993, the EU issued the “Eurovignette Directive”, also known as the infrastructure costs directive. This regulates the voluntary collection of motorway tolls for commercial vehicles. Trucks should bear part of the infrastructure costs. Even in subsequent revisions of the directive, no account was taken of environmental costs, i.e. compensation for the damage that heavy goods traffic causes to human health and the environment. To date, these external costs have not been included, despite a further revision of the regulation in 2006. For years now, lorries have been driving too cheaply compared with other modes of transport, and charges have been limited to vehicles over 12 tonnes gross weight.

### Europe-wide negotiations

In 2017, the EU Commission presented a new draft that includes external costs and reduces the weight limit to 3.5 tonnes. The European Parliament added to the 2018 draft, calling for a mandatory transition to toll systems based upon kilometres actually driven. The amount of the toll is to be based on CO2 emission classes. National transport ministers were unable to reach agreement by the end of 2019: Germany was opposed to lower weight limits, while Italy and the Netherlands considered the surcharges for external costs such as air pollution and noise to be too high. The next negotiations will take place at the beginning of June 2020.

### Clear demands

CIPRA in principle supports the revision of the infrastructure costs directive in order to reduce the volume of road traffic and achieve the goal of climate neutrality, as co-managing director Kaspar Schuler emphasises: “We also welcome the fact that the common rules should now apply to commercial vehicles of 3.5 tonnes and above”. Schuler also points out, however, that all eight signatory states of the Alpine Convention – including Germany and Italy – committed themselves to the principles of the infrastructure costs directive more than 20 years ago, so what is currently being hotly debated would de facto have long been mandatory for some EU countries. CIPRA is therefore focusing on three demands to improve the infrastructure costs directive:

1. The directive must include all external costs as a basis for calculation.
2. The planned permissibility of modal shift tolls in sensitive areas such as the Alps or densely populated regions must be maintained.
3. Tolls must be levied as a function of the number of kilometres travelled.

Further information:

[www.cipra.org/de/themen/alpenpolitik/brennpunkt-transit/](http://www.cipra.org/de/themen/alpenpolitik/brennpunkt-transit/) (de, fr, it, sl)

# Point of view: A building plan for a resilient society



Barbara Wülser, Co-Director  
CIPRA International(c) Darko  
Todorovic

The corona crisis has broken our lives into pieces: relationships, working models, leisure and consumerism are loose building blocks. It is still unclear how we will reassemble them. We now have the chance to draw up a new building plan that is fit for the future, says Barbara Wülser, Co-Executive Director of CIPRA International.

Measurements prove it: energy consumption and CO2 emissions are falling thanks to the measures taken to contain Sars-CoV-2. There is less noise and less seismic vibration, but more birdsong and better air. But let us not fool ourselves: this is not the ecological turnaround! We are currently experiencing one of the warmest months since measurements began and a third dry summer in a row is just around the corner. In order for our post-coronal life and economic activity to succeed, we must give equal weight to ecological and economic aspects in the Future Building Plan. The construction kit may be expanded, while harmful elements must be removed.

There is a danger that governments, in the name of reconstruction, will pour billions into maintaining a system that creates many losers and only a few winners – billions that were promised for the fight against climate change and will now go missing. What we need is a fair burden-sharing to cushion the negative effects of globalisation that have contributed to these crises; the corona crisis as well as the climate crisis. The establishment of global governance for global problems, both in the health and environmental fields, cannot be put off.

What is decisive is how the expected economic stimulus packages are to be targeted and which industries are to be supported with which criteria. The goal of all measures must be to establish a resilient social and economic order where production and consumption are geared to the resources actually available.

In many Alpine regions there are already suitable approaches to solving this problem. Comparatively short, regional value-added chains strengthen the local recycling economy and thus independence from external influences. Local communities promote cooperation and comparison with those who think differently. Freedom and a lack of consumption opportunities stimulate personal responsibility and social innovation, whether it be by repairing appliances instead of buying new ones, by providing childcare or care for the elderly, by running the last remaining inn in the valley or by jointly organised food purchases.

There are also many technical innovations to hand. They often only need an initial impulse, such as start-up funding or demand due to changed conditions – such as now. It is a matter of developing positive visions together and passionately demanding their implementation. This requires networking, cooperation and exchange of knowledge and experiences, from the local to the international.

In the corona crisis, the nation states have distinguished themselves as crisis managers. This crisis can be overcome at some point by means of isolation, medication, vaccinations, etc. The crisis has also shown how quickly we can adapt. Let us make use of this learning experience! The construction plan for the post-corona period must include the prevention of the climate crisis. Because climate change cannot be reversed.

Sources and further information:

[www.republik.ch/2020/04/10/wir-sollten-in-europa-nicht-warten-bis-wir-amerikanische-verhaeltnisse-haben](http://www.republik.ch/2020/04/10/wir-sollten-in-europa-nicht-warten-bis-wir-amerikanische-verhaeltnisse-haben) (de), [www.republik.ch/2020/04/13/verschnaufpause-fuer-die-natur](http://www.republik.ch/2020/04/13/verschnaufpause-fuer-die-natur)(de), [www.infosperber.ch/Artikel/Gesundheit/Covid-19-Krise-Ursache-Gesundheit-Kumulation](http://www.infosperber.ch/Artikel/Gesundheit/Covid-19-Krise-Ursache-Gesundheit-Kumulation) (de), [www.ndr.de/fernsezen/Mit-Anja-Reschke-und-Claudia-Kmfert\\_sendung1032078.html](http://www.ndr.de/fernsezen/Mit-Anja-Reschke-und-Claudia-Kmfert_sendung1032078.html) (de), [atmo-france.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/200327\\_interaction\\_QA\\_covid19.pdf](http://atmo-france.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/200327_interaction_QA_covid19.pdf) (fr)

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## A Matter of the Head: Our Image of Climate Protection



How words influence: Online conference on communication about the climate crisis. (c) Johannes Gautier

Climate change, climate crisis, climate emergency: how do we find the right words to talk about global warming? At the online conference of the Alpine Partnership for Local Climate Action on 30 June and 1 July 2020, the focus will be on communication about climate protection.

How can we discuss climate issues more effectively and creatively? How can we jointly manage the transition to a climate-neutral and resilient Alpine region? These are the questions the Alpine Partnership for Local Climate

Action (ALPACA) will be addressing at its online conference on 30 June and 1 July 2020, under the title "Listening, storytelling, networking". Participants can expect inputs on political framing, psychology, language and communication, interactive workshops with practical examples, networking opportunities and short films on the climate crisis.

Emergency, change, crisis: words influence our thoughts and actions and are connected with experiences. For example, a state of emergency is declared due to a flood, the economy collapses in the financial crisis, and climate change is supposedly progressing slowly and continuously. The Norwegian psychologist Per Espen Stoknes will show which psychological barriers hinder us when communicating about the climate crisis: CO2 can neither be seen nor touched, and many consequences such as the melting of glaciers or poles happen far away. The psychological distance is too great.

The conference is online as a consequence of Covid-19. Digitisation offers opportunities to continue to be involved. For example, the climate protection movement "Fridays for Future" is continuing its protest with social media actions. Barbara Wülser, Co-Executive Director of CIPRA International, is convinced: "Especially now, it is important to work for more climate protection so that this crisis does not disappear from the political and media agenda.

This online conference is made possible by the kind support of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, the Austrian Federal Ministry for Climate Protection, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology and the Province of South Tyrol.

Further information and registration:

[www.cipra.org/en/events/online-conference-climate-change-communication](http://www.cipra.org/en/events/online-conference-climate-change-communication)

## One ticket, seven countries, 48 regions



Travel with a future: the CIPRA Youth Council is committed to sustainable mobility. (c) Alessia & Marika Robustelli

AlpTick, one ticket for all public transportation in the entire Alpine region – this is the vision of the CIPRA Youth Council (CYC). Young people are invited to take part in a survey on mobility in the Alps.

One Alpine ticket that makes travelling in the Alps easier, more sustainable and more attractive for young people during their holidays: the CIPRA Youth Council (CYC) has developed the Alptick project based on its members' experiences travelling in public transportation in the Alps. The comprehensive tickets that do exist do not include all the different means of public transport,

which makes travelling, especially in the more remote places characteristic of the Alps, complicated and expensive.

Cléa Slimani, CYC member from France, explains: "The idea of AlpTick arose from the need to make travelling habits within the Alps more sustainable. Only in this way we can tackle global challenges such as the climate crisis." For the 23-year-old, travelling is a way to get to know and understand our natural and cultural

environment. CYC member Frederick Manck from Germany agrees: “Sustainable travel is crucial for the future of responsible tourism in the Alps”.

With the AlpTick idea, the CYC won the 2018 “Pitch your Project” contest of the European strategy for the Alpine Region (Eusalp). This year the youth council will conduct a survey among young Alpine residents aged between 15-29 years to collect their opinion about the current mobility situation. Another forthcoming aim is to bring decision-makers from the mobility sector together around one table.

To the questionnaire: [www.1ka.si/a/285742](http://www.1ka.si/a/285742)

Sources:

[www.cipra.org/en/cipra/international/projects/current/alptick](http://www.cipra.org/en/cipra/international/projects/current/alptick)

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## New faces at CIPRA



Vanda Bonardo, newly elected President of CIPRA Italy.

Vanda Bonardo is the new President of CIPRA Italy, with changes too to the Executive Board. There has also been a change on the Executive Board of CIPRA Austria.

An environmentalist since her youth, Vanda Bonardo, elected as the new President of CIPRA Italy in May 2020, has a degree in natural sciences and has been active for many years in the Italian nature and environmental protection organisation Legambiente. As President of Legambiente of the Piedmont and Valle d'Aosta regions from 1995 to 2011, she helped shape nature conservation in north-west Italy for well over a decade. As Bonardo said in an initial statement in the face of the corona crisis, it is now important to work to ensure that mountain regions play a pioneering role: “Health and well-being should be at the centre of the ongoing search for balance between humans and nature”. This pioneering role could also strengthen the position of the Alpine region in the EU, said Bonardo.

Agostino Agostinelli will be the new Vice-President of CIPRA Italy. As a delegate of the Federparchi Nature Park Network and former head of the Adda Nord Regional Park, he too is a proven expert in environmental and nature conservation. Outgoing President Federica Corrado (Associazione Dislivelli) will remain a member of the Executive Board, together with Oscar del Barba (Club Alpino Italiano), Valter Giuliano (Federazione Nazionale Pro Natura), Carlo Gubetti (Pro Natura Torino) and Stefano Sala (Mountain Wilderness Italia).

Paul Kuncio has been interim managing director of CIPRA Austria since January 2020, where he also heads the Alpine Convention Office. Following the death of Peter Haßlacher, CIPRA Austria has a new Executive board with Christine Pühringer, Christian Baumgartner and Gerald Pfiffinger.

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## The landscape that moves CIPRA



Focussing on the alpine landscape: The 2019 annual report of CIPRA International (c) Ardan/Unsplash

From a Slovenian mountain pass, via a dying glacier in Switzerland, to a French shepherd's path: in its Annual Report 2019 CIPRA International shows how landscapes and their stories move people.

Mountain peaks, forest edges, riverbanks: the Alpine landscape reflects past and present, creates identity, offers space for recreation, is home or a place of longing. Especially in times of crisis, when contacts with others are missing, shops are closed and events are cancelled, many people rediscover the landscape. It offers moments of relaxation where they can exhale, exercise

and recharge their batteries. In its Annual Report 2019, CIPRA International examines the relationship between humans and landscape and is committed to protecting it.

When people relate to their environment, they take responsibility for it. At numerous events in the Alps CIPRA International has invited young adults, experts, as well as concerned and interested people to experience landscapes. In March, for example, at the opening of the SceneAlps theme book “Landscape is negotiable” in Vaduz/LI, interested parties discussed the changes to the landscape in Liechtenstein. In August, a group of young adults set out on foot to experience the Vršič Pass in Slovenia. In Switzerland, activists bivouacked below the Trift glacier in protest against a planned reservoir.

Protecting habitats for wild bees, switching from cars to buses or bicycles, recognising the strength of cultural diversity, discovering stories about landscapes, making the Alpine region climate-neutral by 2050: discover these and other projects and activities of CIPRA International in its Annual Report 2019.

The Annual Report is available in all Alpine languages in print or as a pdf file from CIPRA International on +423 237 53 53, [international@cipra.org](mailto:international@cipra.org) or [www.cipra.org/jahresberichte](http://www.cipra.org/jahresberichte).

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## Via Alpina: 20 years of long-distance hiking



The Via Alpina: for 20 years, a unifying symbol for sustainable development in the Alpine region. (c) Troy Smith\_flickr

For 20 years, the cross-border long-distance hiking trail known as the “Via Alpina” has connected all eight Alpine countries from Trieste to Monaco. It connects people, living spaces and natural areas along five routes, not only physically but also symbolically.

Under the leadership of the French association known as the “Grande Traversée des Alpes” (GTA), a group of Alpine associations and local authorities founded the Via Alpina in 2000 with the aim of making the Alpine Convention and its objectives of sustainable development in the Alpine region visible through a cross-border hiking trail. Over the years, the Via Alpina has

not only become a tourist attraction, but also a symbol of a common Alpine identity and an international platform: many pilot projects have been developed, such as an international quality guide for long-distance hiking trails, scientific studies or a handbook on hiking as a tool for environmental education for young people. The Via Alpina is also an official implementation project of the Alpine Convention. In 2014 CIPRA International took over the coordination role.

### Backbone for sustainable development

In retrospect, the challenges that were from the very beginning posed by the Via Alpina due to its dimensions are also clear: it comprises five routes, 342 stages and more than 5,000 km of hiking trails. Many stakeholders, such as Alpine associations, states, regions and tourism businesses are involved. “If the Via Alpina project is to remain a backbone for sustainable development in the Alpine region, good and continuous networking is particularly important”, says Nathalie Morelle, who was initially responsible for the Via Alpina as international coordinator. She remembers the experience: “It is of course a challenge to link the many different starting points in the regions and to anchor the various concerns and objectives locally”. For the next 20 years she therefore hopes that many people along the Via Alpina will continue to participate in development and benefit from exchanges with neighbouring countries.

Further information: [www.via-alpina.org](http://www.via-alpina.org)

[CIPRA International · Via Alpina: 20 years of long-distance hiking // Interview with Nathalie Morelle](#)

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## More sustainable living thanks to corona?

Pop-up cycle paths in cities, an organic food boom – corona promotes the trend towards more sustainable lifestyles in the Alpine countries as well. A trend that may be here to stay.



Corona makes it possible: temporary cycle paths in Vienna, Grenoble or Turin.

The corona pandemic brought public transport to a virtual standstill and many of those without a car switched to cycling during this period. Municipalities responded with pop-up cycle paths, which also helped continue to guarantee minimum distancing. Milan/I quickly set up around 35 kilometres of temporary cycle paths. In Vienna/A, too, much-used roads were extended with temporary cycle paths, as also happened in Grenoble/F and Turin/I: the home of Italy's car industry even reduced the maximum speed to 20 km/h on 27 streets. The creation of temporary cycle paths is also being discussed in Munich/D and Zurich/CH. France is subsidising the repair of bicycles to the tune of 50 euros per person with a total budget of 20 million euros to encourage more people to continue to cycle in the long term.

### Boom in organic foods

Since the outbreak of the pandemic, there has also been a new trend in food consumption – a sharp increase in purchases of organic food. According to BioSuisse, this represents up to 30 percent in Switzerland, while in Germany the increase in sales is between 30 and 60 percent. Consumers are increasingly cooking for themselves in these times of home offices and closed restaurants, and seem to be more willing to buy organic food. Aspects such as regionality, type of production and quality all play an important role here.

### Effects on lifestyles

Sustainable lifestyles are also now becoming more prevalent, says Katharina Conradin, President of CIPRA International: "Changes that used to be very slow and take a long time coming are now happening within a very short time." Whether it's cycling or buying regional organic food, CIPRA projects such as "Sustainable Lifestyles in the Alps" or "LOCAL – Low Carbon Alpine Lifestyle" have already shown ways in which "a good life in the Alps can be made possible in harmony with climate protection and environmental awareness", says Conradin. CIPRA has carried out an Alpine-wide survey on the impact of the corona pandemic on our lifestyles, which will serve to develop future projects.

### Sources and further information

[www.lastampa.it/torino/2020/05/10/news/venti-all-ora-27-controviali-di-torino-sfilati-alle-auto-e-regalati-alle-bici-1.38826985](http://www.lastampa.it/torino/2020/05/10/news/venti-all-ora-27-controviali-di-torino-sfilati-alle-auto-e-regalati-alle-bici-1.38826985) (it), [www.derstandard.at/story/2000117320588/hebein-ueberrascht-die-wienerinnen-und-wiener-mit-einem-pop-up](http://www.derstandard.at/story/2000117320588/hebein-ueberrascht-die-wienerinnen-und-wiener-mit-einem-pop-up) (de), [www.placegrenet.fr/2020/05/10/pistes-cyclables-transitoires-ouvertes-agglomeration-grenobloise-deconfinement/293801](http://www.placegrenet.fr/2020/05/10/pistes-cyclables-transitoires-ouvertes-agglomeration-grenobloise-deconfinement/293801) (fr), [www.lefigaro.fr/flash-eco/borne-annonce-un-triplement-du-budget-dedie-au-plan-velo-20200528](http://www.lefigaro.fr/flash-eco/borne-annonce-un-triplement-du-budget-dedie-au-plan-velo-20200528)(fr), [vision-mobility.de/news/corona-krise-auch-in-muenchen-pop-up-bike-lanes-geplant-47228.html](http://vision-mobility.de/news/corona-krise-auch-in-muenchen-pop-up-bike-lanes-geplant-47228.html) (de), [tsri.ch/zh/umverkehr-pop-veloweg-sp-zurich-gessnerallee-corona/](http://tsri.ch/zh/umverkehr-pop-veloweg-sp-zurich-gessnerallee-corona/)(de), [www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-52483684](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-52483684), [www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/21/milan-seeks-to-prevent-post-crisis-return-of-traffic-pollution](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/21/milan-seeks-to-prevent-post-crisis-return-of-traffic-pollution), [www.neweurope.eu/article/france-offers-bike-repair-subsidies-to-boost-cycling-post-lockdown/](http://www.neweurope.eu/article/france-offers-bike-repair-subsidies-to-boost-cycling-post-lockdown/), [www.zeit.de/news/2020-04/02/analyse-corona-krise-stoppt-pommes-markt](http://www.zeit.de/news/2020-04/02/analyse-corona-krise-stoppt-pommes-markt)(de), [www.schweizerbauer.ch/politik--wirtschaft/agrarwirtschaft/konventionelle-lebensmittel-viel-zu-billig-57437.html](http://www.schweizerbauer.ch/politik--wirtschaft/agrarwirtschaft/konventionelle-lebensmittel-viel-zu-billig-57437.html) (de), [www.oekolandbau.de/handel/marktinformationen/der-biomarkt/marktberichte/bio-handel-waechst-waehrend-der-corona-pandemie/](http://www.oekolandbau.de/handel/marktinformationen/der-biomarkt/marktberichte/bio-handel-waechst-waehrend-der-corona-pandemie/) (de)

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## Nomination of 28 sustainable renovations and new buildings



One of the 28 nominated projects: Gasthaus Herwigswald in Switzerland. (c) Christian Kathriner & Martin Wittwer

The jury of the "Constructive Alps" architecture competition will decide by autumn which projects are to be awarded prizes. And the public will also be able to judge the projects: for the first time, there will be an award for the public favourite.

This year is the fifth time that Switzerland and the Principality of Liechtenstein are looking for particularly sustainable renovations and new buildings in the Alpine region. From around 330 projects submitted, 28 were nominated: these include not only residential buildings, but also kindergartens, a chapel, commercial buildings, mountain inns, and cultural institutions from all Alpine

countries. Jury member Köbi Gantenbein praised the great diversity: "The jury took great pleasure in these 28 pearls of architecture, which translate economic and social confidence for rural areas in the Alps into headstrong and climate-friendly architecture". After a personal assessment by the jury, the winners will be chosen and honoured on 6 November in Bern/CH. A travelling exhibition will also present the nominations and then travel from Ljubljana to Nice.

This edition of the International Architecture Award features a special innovation: not only the projects selected by the jury will be crowned, but also projects that are well received by the public. And, between 9 June and the end of August, there will be an opportunity to vote online for your favourite project.

More information:

[www.constructivealps.net](http://www.constructivealps.net) (de, fr, it, sl)

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## Strange but true...



Absurd border dispute due to glacier melt: this Italian refuge is now on Swiss soil. (c) wikimedia, Franco56

An Italian mountain hut has involuntarily become Swiss – all thanks to climate change. A melting glacier in the Valais Alps is changing the course of the border between Switzerland and Italy. This is why two thirds of the Italian *Rifugio Guide del Cervino* is now actually located in Switzerland, which has led to lively discussions between the representatives of the border commission for the two countries. The bone of contention is the crest line. i.e. the line from which the water of the glacier flows on both sides and which has marked the border since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. At an altitude of almost 3,500 metres – the location of the Italian refuge – the melting of the glacier has caused the crest line to shift towards Switzerland. This was established by the Swiss Federal Office of Topography, so a proposal for an exchange was made:

the “new” Swiss soil should be left to the Italians so their hut could remain on Italian territory, while in return the Swiss would be given 650 square metres of land at another, more distant point on the border with Italy. However, the Italian head of the border commission argues that the hut itself has not moved and will therefore remain in Italy – so there is no reason to give land away. The next meeting of the border commission will take place in May. An absurd dispute that, with a little patience, will be resolved by the end of the century – because by then, at the latest, all the glaciers in the Alps will have melted for good.

Sources: [www.nzz.ch/panorama/neue-landesgrenze-schweiz-und-italien-streiten-im-hochgebirge-ld.1546141?reduced=true](http://www.nzz.ch/panorama/neue-landesgrenze-schweiz-und-italien-streiten-im-hochgebirge-ld.1546141?reduced=true) (de)

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## Agenda

**VCÖ mobility award 2020 (Deadline for submission 10.6.20)**, 10.06.2020, Online. [More...](#)

**Online Conference on Climate Change Communication: Listening, Storytelling, Networking**, 30.06.-01.07.2020, Online. [More...](#)

**Fire across the Alps**, 08.08.-09.08.2020, alpswide. [More...](#)

**“Smart mountains: how to make our territories attractive and future-oriented?”** 29.09.-01.10.2020, Sila Natural Park/I. [More...](#)

**International Nature Festival**, 02.10.-10.10.2020, Innsbruck/A. [More...](#)