

First of all, can you briefly tell me about yourself?

I would say I am an enthusiast, a ski-touring enthusiast, I love being in the mountains, I love living in the mountains, but from time to time I like to enjoy the big cities of Europe.

You are Deputy Manager at CIPRA, could you explain what your work is all about?

My main interest when working with CIPRA is how we can change the behaviour of people to behave more sustainably in the different fields. At the end of the day, it is making phone calls, having Zoom meetings and writing e-mails. But to be more precise, I am mostly responsible for the financial tasks, for the budget and administration and mainly also for the project development. We never run out of ideas, we have very creative people here and that is a luxury. You can work on a topic that really drives you and that, I think, is not always the case in other fields of work.

Why did you choose to work and become more involved in the area of environmental protection?

I did a school for tourism management and hospitality, then I started studying communication science with the focus on tourism and I had the impression that everything is very much conservative and about growth. Then I found out that you can do a Master in sustainable tourism and that very much caught my interest. This was sort of a changing point for me, as I realized there is another form of tourism – sustainable tourism.

As committee 4 was all about mobility, how do you commute to your office every day?

I go to work just by sustainable means of transport. So, either I go by train or, especially in summer, I really like to take the bicycle. In winter I mostly use the train, as I go ski touring a lot and I don't have the energy to cycle as well. I never go to work by car, because it is also just annoying.

How does mobility affect every single one of us and why is it important that we address this topic?

We live in a century and in a society, in which it is pretty normal for us to move around a lot. Especially for young people it is normal to go to school in one place, then spend some time at a school somewhere else and after that go to university in yet another city or even country. We have a global perspective and I think it is a human need to go from one place to another. Later in life, we have some really bad examples here in the Alps, you may have a house outside the big cities where all the workplaces are.

Then there are so many cars that commute every day, and this causes lots of trouble. Mobility is a human need and we all need to go around, for exchange and also, very importantly at this time, peace keeping, especially in Europe, but we can do that sustainably, too.

During the „World Café“, the committees presented their postulations. Do you consider them innovative, new and out-of-the-box?

What I very much liked about the session is how informed the group already was and how detailed the postulation was written. Actually, the idea of shifting goods from road to rail to bring the goods to the consumers is, unfortunately, not new. But as we see the system has been as it is for forty or fifty years, so there is no need to really come up with a new idea, because the best solution is on the table, it just needs to be implemented.

If you were in this committee, what kind of input would you add?

I think it would be good to think about consumer patterns because, at the end of the day, it is about us. The goods are shipped here because on the one hand we have a very strong industry, but we also have a huge consumer market. So maybe it's a good thing to reduce your own consumer patterns or rethink them. Looking at the origin of a product, as far as that is possible, would be an approach that could be added from my side. What I also told the committee today is that, unfortunately, the topic of goods crossing the Alps by rail is not black or white, it is grey. Sometimes it is a good solution for reducing the CO₂-emissions, but when it comes to noise pollution for example, it is maybe not the best option, for some parts of the Alps.

Do you have any visions of the future, regarding the topic of mobility?

My wish is that sustainable mobility and conventional mobility are treated the same in the future, that the dependency on the car will be reduced by all the measures that are already on the table. And I think that it is definitely doable to have these models shift in all forms of our mobility patterns.

Which tips or experiences can you specifically share concerning the topics discussed in committee 4 and in what direction would you push the postulations?

Postulation 4.1 is definitely a good starting point to work with and is very close to the reality of the Alpine countries and the European Union.

- Jael Hollenstein