



**EUSALP** EU STRATEGY FOR THE ALPINE REGION  
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## Austrian-Liechtenstein 2025 EUSALP Co-Presidency Opening Event

Ruggell and Vaduz, 4-5 February 2025



The **Austrian-Liechtenstein 2025 EUSALP Co-Presidency Opening Event** was held in Ruggell and Vaduz, Liechtenstein, on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of February 2025. This gathering marked the official launch of an important year of collaboration between Austria and Liechtenstein at the helm of the EU Strategy for the Alpine Region. With a rich agenda that included a High-Level Panel, as well as meetings of the Executive Board (EB), the Board of Action Group Leaders (BAGL), and the joint EB-BAGL session, the event provided a unique platform for high-level representatives, national delegations, Action Group leaders, and Youth Council members to engage in meaningful discussions.

### High-Level Panel: “Cooperation Empowers Transformation”

The High-Level Panel allowed politicians to have a discussion on the future of EUSALP, as well as the shared challenges, opportunities, and priorities. The session featured welcome speeches from **Dominique HASLER**, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Education and Sport of Liechtenstein, and **Nikolaus MARSCHIK**, Secretary General for Foreign Affairs at the Austrian Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs, as well as a panel discussion featuring again **Dominique HASLER**, **Anton MATTLE**, Governor of Tyrol, **Marion PARADAS**, Ambassador of the French Republic to the Principality of Liechtenstein, **Gian Lorenzo CORNADO**, Ambassador of the Italian Republic to the Principality of Liechtenstein, **Marko KOPRIVC**, Slovenian State Secretary for Cohesion Policy, Ministry of Cohesion and Regional Development and **Marc MÄCHLER**, Member of the Cantonal Government of St. Gallen, Switzerland.

The Panel underscored the essential role of cooperation in addressing shared challenges in the Alpine region. Minister **Dominique HASLER** warmly welcomed all participants and reaffirmed the Co-Presidency’s commitment to strengthening collaboration between Alpine nations. She emphasized the importance of EUSALP in fostering regional cooperation and pointed out that the Strategy marks its tenth anniversary, which is an ideal moment to raise awareness among citizens about its impact. She highlighted the economic strength of the Alpine area while acknowledging the pressing challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, natural disasters, and the need for greater energy cooperation. **Nikolaus MARSCHIK** built on this message by stressing that the specific challenges in the Alpine region require close cooperation between the 48 regions across the seven countries that are part of EUSALP. He noted that despite global uncertainties, the Alpine region has maintained its prosperity, and the focus for 2025 will be on connectivity, economic growth, and sustainability. He also reiterated the importance of youth participation, as their voices will shape the future of the region. **Anton MATTLE** provided a perspective from Tyrol, acknowledging the region’s high quality of life and economic success but warning that climate change is a major concern. He advocated for progress in renewable energy, sustainable mobility, and biodiversity conservation, urging collective action to ensure a resilient future for Alpine communities. **Marko KOPRIVC** highlighted recent environmental challenges, including severe flooding, and stressed the need for stronger policies on sustainability,

fostering a bottom-up approach and youth engagement. **Marc MÄCHLER** reaffirmed the commitment to cross-border cooperation, recognizing the need for collective action on energy, particularly concerning water resources. **Marion PARADAS** emphasized France’s strategic focus on economic diversification in Alpine regions and the importance of collaboration platforms – including the Alpine Convention and the Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games. **Gian Lorenzo CORNADO** pointed to the positive impact of digitalization in revitalizing mountain communities, and both emphasized the importance of efficiently addressing climate change.

The dialogue then shifted towards identifying long-term goals for the Alpine region. Climate change and the increasing frequency of natural disasters emerged as dominant concerns, with panellists agreeing on the need for transnational solutions. Energy transition, sustainable mobility, and economic resilience were also key themes, with a shared understanding that cross-border cooperation is the best path forward.

“*Cooperation empowers transformation*” is therefore the motto of the Austrian-Liechtenstein Co-Presidency, whose priorities are:

1. **Mobility transition: sustainable, energy-efficient, multimodal**
2. **Energy transition: Future-proof and sustainable establishment of renewable energies**
3. **Transformation of the construction industry: Circular construction and renovation**

**Dominique HASLER** concluded the session by stressing that cooperation must serve as a democratic platform, ensuring that Alpine communities’ concerns are heard and addressed collectively. With this shared commitment, the EUSALP Co-Presidency embarks on a year dedicated to progress, sustainability, and inclusion, ensuring that the Alpine region remains a model of effective and forward-looking collaboration in Europe.

In a nutshell, the High-Level Panel shared common policy concerns to be addressed at cross-border level, namely:

- The prevention of and adaptation to climate change and extreme climate events.
- The need for greater energy cooperation.
- The progress in sustainable mobility.