

Resolution adopted as amended

TRANSPORT POLICY IN THE ALPS

Last October, 19-20, an Ecologists' Convention on Alpine Crossings was held in Chambéry, France. This event was organised by the European Green Party and three affiliated national parties: "Europe Écologie – Les Verts" (France), "Ecologisti et reti civiche" (Italy), "Les Verts – Die Grünen – I Verdi" (Switzerland). It was supported by the Ecologist group in the European Parliament ("The Greens – European Free Alliance"), and the Ecologist group in the Rhône-Alpes' Regional Council.

The internal work plan for this convention started a year ago and was conducted according to a four step process:

- Firstly, a steering committee prepared a 17-page note on the issues at stake, including freight, individual freedom of movement and future options for transport networks in and throughout the Alps – especially along the Lyon-Torino corridor.
- Secondly, a request for contributions was sent to a wide range of actors involved in alpine transport issues, such as promoters of the Lyon-Torino railway project, environmental NGOs, academics, transport trade unions and transport users' associations. 25 written contributions were collected and displayed on the convention's website (www.convention-traversees-alpines.org).
- Thirdly, 10 of the contributors were interviewed on Friday, October 19 in Chambéry.
- Eventually, 64 members of the French, Italian and Swiss ecologist parties debated these findings. They subsequently defined an 8-page common position.

The final text contains political analysis and propositions relating to alpine valleys' access, tourism related transport, commuters' mobility, freight volumes, modal shift from road to the rail, all with a single main objective: reducing dramatically the volume of trucks and cars. Its essential contents are integrated in the motion below.

The quality of the convention's democratic process has been acknowledged by every participant. The final common position has also been approved almost unanimously. It is in line with the long-term ecologists' fight for sustainable transport networks and the preservation of the Alps.

For a reorientation of infrastructure priorities and a modal shift in transport policies between France and Italy

Road transport of goods within and through the Alps is not only a major source of pollution for areas crossed and their inhabitants, but it also contributes significantly to greenhouse gas emissions. For these two main reasons, this type of transport must be reduced drastically.

Achieving a sustainable economic system also means decoupling economic development and freight traffic, in order to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

European ecologists call for the implementation of a vigorous economic localisation policy by fighting against an absurd international division of the labor market, as well as against intensive farming that no longer respects the four seasons.

This will involve the promotion of short transport and trade routes and the stimulation of local production systems, especially for daily agricultural products and consumer goods, and the bringing of jobs closer to areas of consumption.

Health, environmental and social costs internalization policies are the best tools for ensuring such an outcome.

Thus, the problem of Alpine crossings must be tackled at the broader alpine scale, in order to reduce flows of goods, and within the framework of a modal policy shift to a Trans-European Transport Network (TEN – T). Such a policy cannot be solely limited to infrastructures.

Public financing mechanisms, especially European ones, must respect three fundamental principles in order to ensure protection of the environment and biodiversity:

- clear and transparent investment criteria that give priority to those projects with the least environmental impact and the greatest socially benefit, in terms of quality job creations and public health;
- a methodical application of existing rules on democratic consultation, with critical expertise in advance of any project, as demanded by the Aarhus European convention;
- an integrated application of impact assessment rules and environmental norms, starting with the *Natura 2000* network.

The alpine crossings' issue has to be tackled with a perspective of reducing the physical goods' volumes exchanged through the Alps under the currently measured threshold (193,3 millions of tons in 2010).

Considering the convention's conclusions, the European Green Party:

- Expresses its steady opposition to any new road tunnel or tunnel gallery, especially at the Gotthard, Mont Blanc, Fréjus and Tende passages.
- Considers that along the Lyon-Torino corridor, the existing railway tunnel of the international section (Mont-Cenis Tunnel) enables the modal shift that ecologists are calling for, for the time being and in the medium-term. A new international tunnel is therefore unnecessary, as long as genuine fiscal and social measures for modal shift to the rail are postponed. The current evolution of existing freight traffic does not justify this construction either.
- Tunnel projects that have already been scheduled or initiated, such as the Brenner Base Tunnel, need to be reconsidered with regard to their environmental and economic viability.

European funds should thus be concentrated on this modal shift by improving the existing infrastructures and upgrading them on saturated sections in France and Italy (Lyon-Chambéry-Maurienne Valley and Torino-Susa Valley).

The European Green Party stands for the implementation of a European tax system that fosters this modal shift. Taxation would be set on road freight transport over the entire road network. Its level should be similar to the road usage fees implemented in Switzerland ("Redevance Poids Lourds liée aux Prestations", cf. "Heavy Vehicle Fee").

Giving or not giving a green light to a new international tunnel has a structural impact on public finances, but also on local and international traffic, health conditions and the environmental situation in the Alps. During the French-Italian summit of December 3rd 2012, François Hollande, President of the French Republic, and Mario Monti, President of the Council of Ministers of the Italian Republic, must not make commitments based on outdated analyses without a public debate at the level of the entire French-Italian region impacted by the project and before the European decision-making process regarding infrastructures and their financing is completed.