



CIPRA
LIVING IN
THE ALPS

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Media release on the Via Alpina hiking scholarships 2022

Via Alpina Explorer on the trail

Get your boots on, get set, go! Until the end of September 2022, nine “explorers” will be hiking along the redesigned Via Alpina route. They tell stories about alpine biodiversity, the magic of long-distance hiking, regional specialities and encounters along the way – in a series of short videos, reports, film and art projects.

To mark the 20th anniversary of the Via Alpina, CIPRA International has awarded eight hiking scholarships to people from all over the Alpine region who will embark on a voyage of discovery along the revised red route of the long-distance trail. The VAUDE Sport Albrecht von Dewitz Foundation is supporting the Via Alpina Explorers' journey with 1,500 euros and a hiking rucksack.

From mid-June through until the beginning of September, the so-called “explorers” have been hiking the revised red route, each completing at least a section of about 200 kilometres. The routes run through all the Alpine countries. At the end, the explorers will meet at the AlpenWoche in Brig-Glis/CH at the beginning of September. Until that time you can follow them on social media under the hashtag **#viaalpinaexplorer**.

Hiking for change

“Via Alpina shows that Alpine tourism and environmental protection are not mutually exclusive”, says Timm Rotter from Munich/D. The social media expert puts encouraging stories about environmental protection in the Alps and the people behind it at the forefront of his journey, because climate protection needs role models. Aline Schädler, a medical student from Liechtenstein, is documenting her hike along the Via Alpina on the TikTok platform, among others. For her it is her first long-distance hike, while Julien Defois from Toulouse/F is already hiking the Via Alpina for the second time this summer. “Sometimes you need a radical change. Hiking the Via Alpina helped me do that”, says Julien. As a Via Alpina Explorer, he dedicates himself – in cinematic and literary form – to the “inner journey” when long-distance hiking. Sophia Niederkofler from South Tyrol creates a somewhat different map of her hike, with snapshots of memories, breaks and encounters. Her very personal hiking map encourages you to pause: “Breaks can lead to new encounters, they recharge your batteries, give space for conversations.”



Discovering similarities and differences

“With this project, we want to promote the cross-border exchange of people and cultures”, explains Via Alpina project worker Isabella Helmschrott. Jakob Dietachmair, Deputy Executive Director of CIPRA International and coordinator of this unique long-distance hiking trail, adds: “With the Via Alpina it’s like with cheese. The basic ingredients are the same everywhere, but a cheese from Slovenia tastes different from a French one.” The trail has been showcasing the differences and similarities across the borders of all Alpine countries for two decades now. The newly revised Via Alpina route is already available on the Outdooractive tour portal.

This press release and printable press photos are available for download at:
<http://www.cipra.org/en/press/press-releases>

Further information:

Michael Gams, Project Manager Communications, CIPRA International, +423 237 53 04,
michael.gams@cipra.org

Isabella Helmschrott, Project Officer and Executive Director of CIPRA Switzerland,
isabella.helmschrott@cipra.org

The Via Alpina, the transalpine long-distance hiking trail

The Via Alpina – for two decades an implementation project of the Alpine Convention – runs like a red thread through all eight Alpine countries from Trieste/I to Monaco. A hike along the Via Alpina makes tangible Alpine-wide challenges such as climate change and pressure of use. But it also shows solutions such as sustainable building culture, gentle tourism and innovative projects. And it is always accompanied by the incredible beauty and diversity of nature, culture and languages in the Alps.

Crowdfunding for the Via Alpina

Well-signposted and safe hiking trails from Trieste/I to Monaco, simple and individual tour planning thanks to technical innovations, a modern website with information about current challenges on the way to the summit and experience reports from all Alpine countries: the transalpine long-distance hiking trail Via Alpina is getting a new look – online and offline. CIPRA International is seeking support for this through crowdfunding. www.okpal.com/via-alpina-crowdfunding

CIPRA, a diverse and multifaceted organisation

CIPRA, the International Commission for the Protection of the Alps, is a non-governmental umbrella organisation with national representatives and one regional representative in the seven Alpine countries. It represents more than 100 associations and organisations. CIPRA works towards achieving sustainable development in the Alps; it also strives to preserve the natural and cultural heritage, maintain regional diversity, and bring about solutions to cross-border problems in the Alpine region.
www.cipra.org